March comes in like a lion
Chica Umino

JUMP COMICS

3月のライオン

羽海野チカ

March comes in like a lion
Chica Umino

7

3月のライオン
羽海野チカ
7

JUMP COMICS

白泉社
6317

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新人王を獲った零だが、
いじめられているヒナのために、
自分が何もできないと勝手に悪戦苦闘に巻き込まれていた。
一方、ヒナは学校でいじめ問題そっちのけな上に、
幸田にいじられ喧嘩っぱやくなり、
二人の間もぎくしゃく気味。
物語は新たな展開をみせる。
「本当の優しさとは何か」提寄の力を借りかけます。
様々な人間が何かを取り戻していく優しい物語です。

TOKYO MX 4月放送!!

ビッグコミック
ANIMAL
毎月第2・第4の木曜日発売

ヤングアニマル
Young Animal
1st
毎月第1・第3金曜日発売

羽海野チカ
Chica Umino

「3月のライオン」連載

「さて、ぼのぼのスレーヤーするからおまえらのおひとり1人、とんとんんしてよ。ぼくいのきとこにゃあ、かぜをひかせしまうとう」

今も、ぼくプンちゃん。
やっぱりふゆは、カラのおかねとんとおおかぜでないぼくは、どくにんとくらんでついてきみん。
おおきをもうつかぜ、すくにきをもとよんだ!
だってみんとんがおれちうと
おぼのスレーヤーするでしょう?
だからぼくできをとんで、
おんとんをかかなおしてもらうのよ!
これからも、きをもとくてみはっておかんどうぶとうしてね!

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3月のライオン 7 羽海野チカ

3月のライオン
March comes in like a lion
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7
羽海野チカ

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QC BY KIWIISH

3月のライオン

March comes in like a lion
Chica Umino

羽海野チカ
将棋監修●先崎学八段

7

Chapter 64 Silver Wings 7

Chapter 65 River Scenery 25

Chapter 66 Where the Sun Shines 39

Chapter 67 Small World 55

Chapter 68 Black Mist 73

Chapter 69 Light 91

Chapter 70 Small Palm 111

Chapter 71 In the Sun 127

Chapter 72 The Flow of Things 143

Chapter 73 White Storm 159

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Chapter 64

Silver Wings

3月のライオン

March comes in like a lion

Chica Umino

"If you believe, your dreams will come true."

That's probably true.

But one part is missing.

—This is the correct phrase.

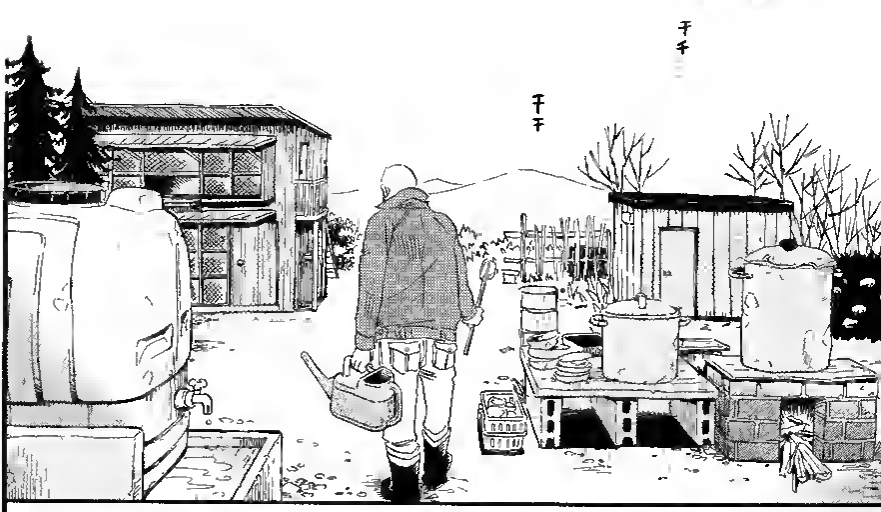
To go even further,

If you believe

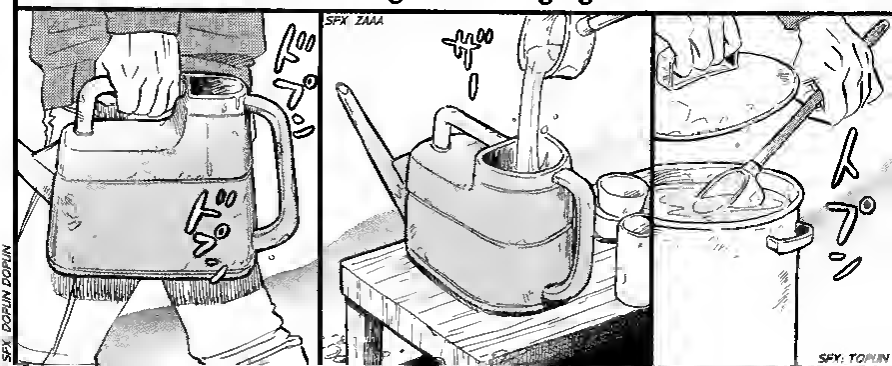
"and you put in one more hour than all your rivals and work hard, every day, then to a degree, your dreams will be considerably more likely"

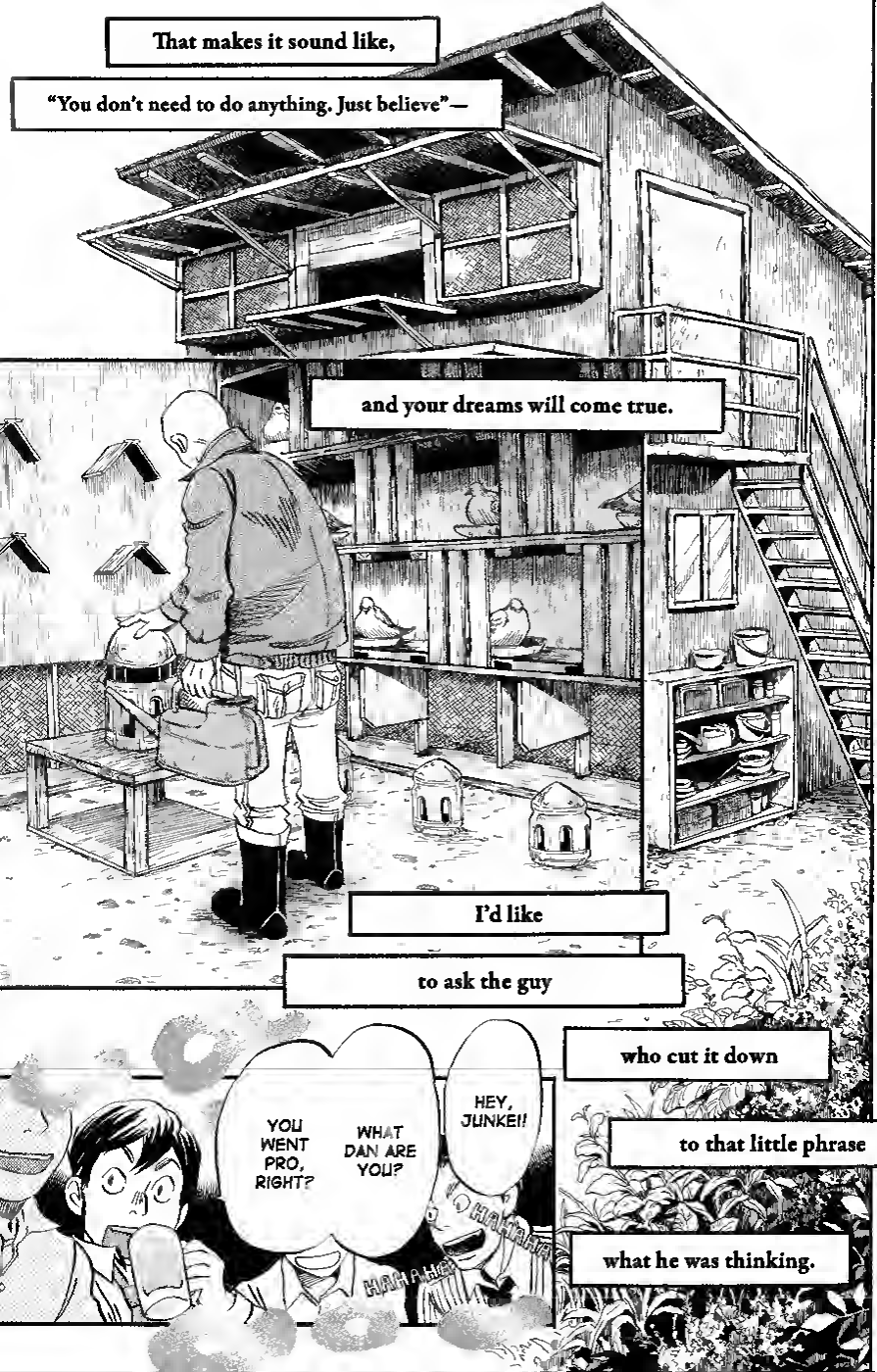
to come true.

The short version works better for marketing purposes.



But I think that might be abridging it too much.




That makes it sound like,
"You don't need to do anything. Just believe"—
and your dreams will come true.
I'd like
to ask the guy
who cut it down
to that little phrase
what he was thinking.
HEY, JUNKEI!!
YOU WENT PRO, RIGHT?
WHAT DAN ARE YOU?
HAHAHA
HAHAHA

HEY!!! YOU'D BETTER BECOME A MEIJIN OR SOMETHING SOON!
HAHAHA
And what comes to my mind is always this.
I mean, like,
CAN YOU GET FAMOUS AND GO ON TV AND STUFF?
Don't you guys play on Sunday mornings and stuff?
WELL, I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THAT STUFF.
HEH REALLY?
WELL, I'M 5-DAN.
SO, UH, DO SHOGI PLAYERS MAKE A LOT?
Whenever I go to places with lots of people,
I always get asked the same questions.
I MEAN, YOU GOTTA WHILE YOU'RE STILL IN YOUR 20'S! THAT'D BE SO COOL, RIGHT?!
THAT'S ALL? WELL, YOU'D BETTER CLIMB UP THAT CORPORATE LADDER AND MAKE IT TO DEPARTMENT CHIEF OR BOARD MEMBER SOON!
SO, HOW MUCH DOES A SUPER-VISOR MAKE A YEAR?
I DON'T GET IT.
HEH. WHAT'S A SUPER-VISOR?
DRINKS: CHUUHAI (SHOUCHUU HIGHBALL) BEER
SFX: DAAH
I'd say those are right around the same level of offensiveness as their questions...
HA HA HA
HA
HA HA HA

At first, I would explain in detail,
but as soon as I did, they would lose interest,
so I decided to just keep quiet and wait for the subject to change.
It's not something people really want to hear.
I realised it was just small talk to them,
like how someone might say, "Nice weather today, isn't it?"
It's no big deal.
It's just that
I'm here,
simply being hurt
by each and every one of their questions...
OH YEAH, JUNKEI, ARE YOU STILL
RAISING PIGEONS OR SOMETHING?
FOR REAL?
SHOGI AND PIGEONS? JUST HOW MUCH OF A MANIAC IS JUNKEI?
HUH? PIGEONS?
HAHAH!
HA..
OH, YEAH.
HE WAS, HE WAS!
RACING PIGEONS!!
SFX: HUH (SURPRISE)
SFX: GATANN

since forever
He's been an oddball
He's intense
Huh
He's no scary looking as always
I'VE GOTTA GO TAKE CARE OF MY PIGEONS.
My grandfather, who loved both shogi and racing pigeons, got me started on them.
Much like shogi, where you get better results the more effort you put in,
the more love and labour you put into them
the more the pigeons will respond.
I became completely entranced by them.
But now, both of them
are about to slip from my fingers.
I got my second rank-loss point this spring...
Just when I had finally managed to go up a class to C1,

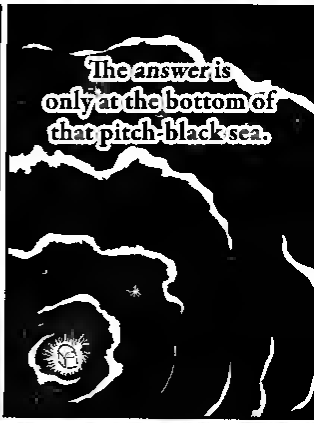
And "Gin", my beloved racer pigeon that I poured my heart and soul into,
didn't make it back from a 500 km race that happened at the end of spring.
makes my heart feel like it's getting torn apart.
Just imagining him injured and suffering somewhere
Was it because of the weather...?
Did he hit a power line...?.
Did he get done in by a hawk?
It felt like everything had been swallowed up by those black clouds.

Trying to read far ahead
is like diving
to the bottom of the pitch-black sea.

I used to be able
to get more answers
the more I dove.
My desire had
overcome my fear.

can
only be
found in
an even
deeper
place.

As you
move
forward,
the next
answer


The answer is
only at the bottom of
that pitch-black sea.

But right behind me

my effort has been limited.

Because of all the times when the feeling that "I probably won't find anything anyway" overcame

the feeling that "I might be able to find something"

Even if I dive so deep it feels like my body might break apart,

I'm mostly coming back empty-handed.

But now that six years have passed since I turned pro,

it feels like I can't move forward at all.

are Kiriyama and Nikaidou

jumping in like it's the most natural thing in the world to do,

again and again.

they keep throwing themselves in,
Uncon-cerned with the anguish,
they come up with more and more counter-measures to try, over and over again.
They can't be in their right minds.
Even if they come up empty-handed again and again,
leaving me behind
petrified with fear.
But I also knew his heart was far stronger than mine.
I'd heard he had health problems.
I didn't want to hand over the title that was the last possibility I had left.
I wanted to win no matter what it took.

Oh yes, at that time,
There has been a draw by repetition, so the game will be replayed in 30 minutes.
And that he's a person who's gone much further than I have...
he had smiled —
I'm certain of it...
And then
a thought had burst into my head.

I want to go back to the world
that these guys are in
once again...

SFX: GARIH GARI GAH

SFX: GAH GA

SFX: GAH GAH

GIN..
THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL
I'M GONNA LOSE NEXT TIME, GOT IT?!
THAT IDIOT.

HEY,
I MADE YOU A SPECIAL MEAL TO HELP YOUR STAMINA
THERE THERE. GOOD BOY..
MAKE SURE YOU EAT UP, OKAY? GIN...
YOU'VE BECOME SO LIGHT, IT'S LIKE YOU'RE MADE OF PAPER...!
BUT IT'S OKAY.
I'M WITH YOU.
YOU'LL BE IN TIP-TOP SHAPE SOON.
AND THEN
YOU'LL FLY WITH ALL YOUR HEART AGAIN!!
AND STARTING TOMORROW
I'M GOING TO PUT ALL OF MY HEART INTO WORKING AS HARD AS I CAN.
SO LET'S MAKE IT A RACE
TO SEE WHO CAN FLY FIRST!!
Chapter 67 END

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QC BY KIWIISH, MARIS, & PANDA

Chapter 65

River Scenery

I thought
I was dreaming.
Sitting there all alone
in an unfamiliar town,
not knowing
where I should go,
feeling helpless,
on the verge
of tears...

There you stood,
breathless,
your hair all messed up
from running so fast.

KIRIYAMA-KUN...
SFX GIRA GIRA (GLARE)
A-
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
Serious
B-
BUT TODAY WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A CELEBRATION
OF YOU BECOMING THE NEW-COMER KING, KIRIYAMA-KUN...
I'M NOT SURE...
IF WE REALLY SHOULD
OF COURSE!
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ADD ANYTHING YOU WANT TO IT!
SFX KOKURI (NOD)
I PROMISE, IT'S ALL RIGHT!
PLEASE GO RIGHT AHEAD!
あんみつ
抹茶パパロア

SFX: BAH
SFX: BAH
I'll have matcha Bavarian cream with coarse anko on it!!
I-I'LL HAVE ANMITSU WITH EXTRA SOY BEANS AND FRESH CREAM ON IT!
O-OKAY THEN.
I'LL TAKE YOU UP ON THAT OFFER!!
HAWAA
A-ALSO. ON THE MATCHA BAVARIAN CREAM. ADD CHESTNUTS AND FRESH CREAM!!
Top it off with condensed milk!
And condensed milk!!
EXTRA APRICOTS AND ALSO SHIRATAMA!! THREE... FOUR ON TOP OF THAT!!
A-AND
HUFF
HUFF
Oh, I want apricots too!!
MENU EXTRAS
ANKO 80 YEN
CREAM 100 YEN
SFX: KAKI KAKI KAKI KAKI (WRITING)
SFX: PEEA PEEA (FLIP FLIP)
Oh my, I don't seem to have enough space on the slip...
Okay, I halve the portion to make it children's size!!
Oh, right, what about you, Momo?!
Put two small scoops of vanilla ice cream and azuki ice cream on each of those!!
Also, oh yeah, how could I forget?!
THE SAME AS HINA-CHAN!!
C-Can they eat all that?!
AWA WA WA
HU HA
I FORGOT THE ICE CREAM!! THAT'S IMPORTANT!!
YEAH! THANKS ONEE-CHAN.
SFX: ZOKKU...
SFX: ZOOOH

OH. RIGHT! OJII-CHAN!
OJII-CHAN. WHAT WILL YOU HAVE?
ME?
I'M OKAY WITH ANYTHING .. ISOBEYAKI IS FINE
ISOBEYAKI?!
.....
THREE, PLEASE
WHAT ABOUT YOU, REI-CHAN?!
WHAT WILL YOU HAVE?!
UM, ER ..
Never been to a shop like this
I'LL... HAVE UDON, I GUESS MAYBE THIS.
CHIKARA UDON.
TWO.. THREE, PLEASE..
And two serving dishes...
CHIKARA UDON?!

SFX: KYAH
MY STOMACH'S ABOUT TO BURST...
WHAT TO DO?! I MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO GET INTO MY WORK DRESS TOMORROW...
I ATE TOO MUUUCH!
I...
I CAN'T MOVE.
I'M DYIING!
H-
HOLD ON.
LET'S REST A BIT!
Hey!! Akari!!
Did you gain weight again?!
Th-The zipper won't go uuup!
SFX: ICHIH
(SFX: BURU BURU...) (SHAKING)
Women sure are ferocious, aren't they Just how much can they eat?
BUT STILL, I'M HAPPY.
WHAT DO I DO?! AUNTIE IS GONNA SCOLD ME AGAINNN!
THEY JUST KEPT PILING MORE AND MORE ON...
—BY THE END THEY HAD ENOUGH TO FILL A WASH BASIN.
メガもってり
SFX: MEGA SERVING
IT WAS LIKE...
THEY HAD COMPLETELY DIFFERENT DISHWARE FROM WHAT THE OTHER CUSTOMERS HAD.
UH... IT WAS PROBABLY ONE OF THOSE THINGS
BOWLS FOR HIYASHI CHUUKA OR SOMETHING...

BUT, DON'T YOU SEE?!
"SOME-THING SWEET."
"SOME-THING SALTY"
"SWEET, SALTY", "SWEET, SALTY"..
IT'S ALL A VICIOUS CYCLE (A FOOD CHAIN)!
Ehhh?!
Ehh?!
How's it my fault now?!
Why?!
Ah, me, too?!
B-BECAUSE YOU ORDERED THAT ISOBEYAKI
Ooh...
IT-
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT OJII-CHAN
I'm dying!
FOR ORDERING THAT CHIKARA UDON
AND REI-CHAN!
WHO KNOWS WHEN IT'LL EEEND!!
"COLD, HOT", "COLD, HOT".
THE CHIKARA UDON WARMED THEM BACK UP AGAIN.
AND ON TOP OF THAT, AFTER OUR BELLIES WERE CHILLED FROM THE ICE CREAM
What is this?
An auditory hallucination?
They said the same things...
They sound just like their grandma and Mikako.
What have you done to me?!
You can't stop when the flavour changes you know!!
something like that before too
I think I've heard
Yeah.

IF NEI-CHAN TRIES TO USE HER ARMS RIGHT NOW HER TUMMY MIGHT EXPLODE..
J... JUST A SECOND. I'M SORRY, MOMO.
HOLD @ MEEEE!
WHAT?!
Hina-chan, Momo is going to leak!
OHHH, I TOLD YOU, YOU SHOULD'VE GONE WHILE WE WERE IN THE SHOP!
Awawa...
ACTUALLY, IS THIS EVEN AN EMERGENCY..
I wonder if Momo can tell
フラフラ
I CAN'T WALK ANY-MORE!
Haa Haa...
Aw...
Geez...
Seems pretty chipper (hehe)
SFX FURA FURA (SHAKY)
SHOULD I RUN?
HUH? REALLY?
MOMO'S GONNA LEAK OUT...
MOMO,
WE'RE ALMOST HOME, OKAY?!
TH-
THEN I'M GONNA RUN, TOO!
Full stomach
SFX FURA FURA (SHAKY)
REALLY? SORRY, KIRIYAMA-KUN.
AH,
THEN, HOW ABOUT I..

MOMO, ARE YOU ABLE TO HOLD IT?
OR SHOULD WE GO TO A PARK TOILET?
NOOO!
I WANNA GO HOME!!
I GUESS YOU'RE SCARED OF PARK TOILETS, HUH, MOMO?
OKAY, OKAY!
LET'S HURRY HOME!
HINA-CHAN'S BEING MEAN!
Hahaha.
OJII-CHAN,
YEH?
I'M GLAD THAT...
HINA IS SMILING.
MHM
THE BOY IS TO THANK, HUH...
I'M BACK!
OJII-CHAN, ONEI-CHAN,
LISTEN, LISTEN!
IT WAS AMAZING!
GUESS WHAT?!

AND THEN HE GAVE ME MEDICINE AND PUDDING!
I WAS BY THE KAMO RIVER, AND HE CAME!
SEE,
ALL THE WAY TO KYOTO!!
KIRIYAMA-KUN CAME
YOU'RE KIDDING!
EHH?!
Ehh?!
WE DIDN'T MAKE ANY PLANS AT ALL!
JUST FROM KNOWING WHEN AND WHERE WE HAD FREE TIME!!
ISN'T IT AMAZING THAT HE FOUND ME?!
HOW'S YOUR STOMACH? DOES IT HURT?
EVEN IF IT'S FREE TIME, IT'S PROBABLY NOT GOOD TO BE SEEN WITH PEOPLE FROM OTHER SCHOOLS
IF YOU HAVE THAT JACKET ON, AT LEAST NOBODY WILL RECOGNISE YOU IF THEY'RE JUST PASSING BY
HM
I'M GETTING DIZZY...
IT'S NO GOOD
Hm...
NO, I'M OKAY RIGHT NOW
BUT.. I COULDN'T EAT EARLIER
YEAH.
DON'T FORCE YOURSELF
AH, THEN FORGET ABOUT IT
I SEE..

I THOUGHT THAT MIGHT BE THE CASE
SO I BOUGHT A FEW THINGS ON THE TRAIN.
I HAVE SOME PUDDING AND PEACH JELLY
AND APPLE JUICE AND SPONGE CAKE AND—
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN EAT ANY OF THAT?
UM..
THE PUDDING SOUNDS GOOD
OKAY.
NOW WE..
JUST NEED A SPOON
YUM!
THIS MEDICINE SAYS IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE TAKEN "BETWEEN MEALS"
SO..
YOU SHOULD TAKE IT AFTER YOU'RE DONE WITH THE NEXT ACTIVITY, THE GINKAKU-JI
HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT MY NEXT ACTIVITY WAS THE GINKAKU-JI?
HUH?
IT WAS ON YOUR ITINERARY
SFX KYOTON
BUT DIDN'T YOU ONLY SEE THAT FOR LIKE A SECOND?!
WELL, A SECOND'S ALL I NEED TO MEMORISE IT
*His memorisation skills as a shogi player are no joke...

Even though we were on the river bank in an unfamiliar town,

just by sitting next to me,

Rei-chan made it feel like I'd known that river bank forever.

The feeling of familiarity made me calm.

Chapter 65 END

BE WITH YOU SCANS NOTES

PAGE 029

SHIRATAMA, is a type of mochi dango made using a glutinous Japanese short grain rice called mochigome.

PAGE 030

ISOBEYAKI is grilled mochi, wrapped in seaweed.
CHIKARA UDON is udon topped with slices of toasted mochi.

PAGE 031

Although HIYASHI CHUUKA translates to "chilled Chinese", it is a Japanese dish of chilled ramen noodles.

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QC BY PANDA

Chapter 66

Where the Sun Shines

SFX: C'MERE C'MERE
AH, KIRIYAMA, OVER HERE!
YOU GOT A SEC?
将棋会館
AH, YAGIHARA KISHOU, GOOD EVENING
OKAY, HAVE A SEAT.
YO, KIRIYAMA-KUN! CONGRATS ON BECOMING NEWCOMER KING.
TH-THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
A COMMEMORATIVE GAME..
.....
WITH SOUYA MEIJIN...?

EH? UM..
IS IT GOING TO BE HELD HERE AT THE ASSOCIATION BUILDING LIKE USUAL?
Just saying
WELL, USUALLY IT WOULD, BUT THIS YEAR IS DIFFERENT.
WE'RE GONNA CALL PEOPLE IN, DO INTERVIEWS, AND GONNA MAKE IT A BIG SHOW.
A REAL HUMDINGER
that name out loud
YEP!!
AS BIG AS A TITLE MATCH!
made my entire body
break out in goosebumps.

Our country's
REALLY...?
UM...
WHY
FOR SOME-THING LIKE THIS...
WOULD I SUDDENLY BE DOING THAT...?
god's child...
I HAVE!
I DID, TOO.
TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST WITH YOU KIRIYAMA,
HAVEN'T YOU HEARD THAT IT'S COMMON
FOR A NEWCOMER KING TO LATER BECOME MEIJIN?
AND ON TOP OF THAT, YOU'RE STILL FOLLOWING SOUYA
AS THE 5TH MIDDLE SCHOOL PRO IN SHOGI HISTORY!!

NOW YOU'VE GOT SOUYA TO CONTEND WITH..
BUT...
IT'S WAY DIFFERENT FROM OUR ERA.
HONESTLY, I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU GUYS
DON'T YOU?☆
MAN, I SURE AM GLAD I WAS BORN WAY BEFORE HIM!☆ SURE AM!♡
THAT GUY WASN'T AROUND WHEN WE WERE STARTING OUT.
YES.
YOU SURE ARE MAKING IT SOUND SIMPLE, THOUGH!
YOU'LL BE A MEIJIN TOO, KIRIYAMA-CHAN! SOUNDS GOOD, RIGHT?☆ THE CURRENT MEIJIN AND THE FUTURE MEIJIN! IT'LL BE A REAL STARRING ATTRACTION!!!
SO WE'RE ALL GOT HIGH HOPES
AHA
UHHHH
SFX PONNN
SFX SPARKLE SPARKLE
HONESTLY.. I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED IN SHIMADA'S LIFE..
...So Shimada's still in his 30's, is he...?
—NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, IT'S A REAL MYSTERY HOW THE TWO OF THEM COULD BE THE SAME AGE..
Clearly Shimada should be more like Gotou's age, right?
UM..
DO YOU THINK MAYBE YOU COULD STOP THERE..?
SFX SHABBY
AHH..
STILL, REMEMBER HOW CUTE SOUYA WAS BACK WHEN HE GOT HIS FIRST TITLE--?!
HE'S AN OLD MAN NOW, THOUGH.
I MEAN, HE'S THE SAME AGE AS SHIMADA, ISN'T HE?
YES HE IS.
HEY!
SOUYA'S NOT AN OLD MAN!

I just got out of the bath
Achoo!
Somebody must be talking about me
AND THEN THAT IDIOT SHIMADA..
AND HE JUST HAD TO CRAWL HIS WAY BACK FROM THE LOSERS BRACKET.
HE LOST ONCE, AND THEN COULDN'T JUST TAKE A HINT
WE HAD TONS OF PEOPLE DOING INTERVIEWS
AND THE BIG BOARD COMMENTARY WAS ALL SET AND READY TO GO..
THE PLAN I HAD WAS
IT WOULD BE SAKURAI 7-DAN'S "CHALLENGE FOR HIS FIRST EVER TITLE!!"
--SPEAKING OF WHICH,
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO ABOUT THIS YEAR'S KISHOU CHAMPION-SHIP..?
SHOGI ASSOCIATION'S MOUNTAINEERING CLUB TOP ☆ ALPINIST
ATTACK → INVITES PEOPLE HE LIKES TO THE MOUNTAINS (AND PRETTY TALL ONES, AT THAT)

POSTER KISHOU SEN GAME 1
MATCH HEIAN YEAR

"Imagination Video
Ah, yeah I think I see it too
将棋戦
Imagining it
WHO'D GET THE LEAST BIT EXCITED? HUUUH..?
ALIGH WITH A MATCH UP LIKE THAT,
I MEAN, COULD IT GET ANY LESS COMPELLING?
I GET DEPRESSED JUST THINKING ABOUT WHAT THE POSTER WOULD LOOK LIKE
Close-ups of two dull old men...
I sure as hell wouldn't go if I had a choice!!
AND WHAT'S MORE
IN THE THIRD MATCH TO DETERMINE THE CHALLENGER, HE WON IT ALL AND CAUSED AN UPSET AND ALL THAT
将棋会館
SERIOUSLY, COULD I JUST GET A BREAK..?
B-BUT SHIMADA-SAN PUT TONS OF EFFORT IN, TOO, UH, RIGHT? (VOICE OF A

SHIN KIMURA (TURN)
—SO BASICALLY,
YOU'RE REALLY HELPING US OUT HERE, KIYIRAMA-KUN. GOOD LUCK!!
THE REAL WORLD IS A TOUGH PLACE.
Sniff...
somebody's saying some pretty mean things about me...
For some reason I get the feeling
There's not one good thing about it!
HE'S REALLY GOOD AT SHOGI AND HE'S STUBBORN. THERE'S NOT A SINGLE REDEEMING THING ABOUT THIS!!
AND ON TOP OF THE TOTAL LACK OF YOUTH AND SPECTACLE
IF NO ONE'S TALKING ABOUT IT, WE'LL LOSE SPONSORS.
THE KISHOU CHAMPION-SHIP WILL DISAPPEAR!
HELPING... OUT?
I MEAN WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU.
将棋会館

HEY, KIRI-YAMA?
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU HOLDING SOMETHING IN THERE?
YOUR FACE IS ALL RED
ARE YOU HOT?
WANT SOME BARLEY TEA?
I don't even know how I got home that day...
So many things were swirling around in my head
I was afraid I wouldn't be able to keep my balance.
And it kept going even after I got into my futon.

On the surface of the river
the light seemed to flicker
and sway...
Then, the next day,
SIGN: SHOUKA CLUB
SORRY I'M LATE!
将科部ガラララ
EXCUSE..

SIGN: CONGRATS ON BECOMING NEWCOMER KING KIRIYAMA!!
FROM EVERYONE AT THE SHOUKA CLUB
桐山君新人王おめでとう!!
将科部一同より
ME..
……

NOW THEN...
LET'S ONCE AGAIN CONGRATULATE KIRIYAMA-KUN ON HIS WINNING THE TITLE OF NEWCOMER KING.
Cheeers!!
TH-
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
AND WITHOUT FURTHER ADO,
I PRESENT TO YOU THE FRUITS OF THE SCIENCE DEPARTMENT OF THE SHOUKA CLUB'S EFFORTS.
ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN THE MENU...
Hahaha...
BEAKER CASPI SMALL BEAKER PLUMB JA
.....
FIRST, THE JUICE WE JUST TOASTED WITH WAS HAND-MADE GINGER ALE.
I made it using the fresh ginger growing behind the gymnasium.
THE CASPIAN SEA YOGURT THAT I DILIGENTLY RAISED IN THE PHYSICS PREP-ROOM REFRIGERATOR.
ALSO FRESH NATTOU I HARVESTED WITH WHITE FLOUR DUMPLINGS.
WE HAVE PLUM JAM MADE FROM THE PLUMS FROM THE TREE IN FRONT OF THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE AS WELL AS OUR CLUB-STAPLE RAMUNE.
MUHAHAHA
カスピ

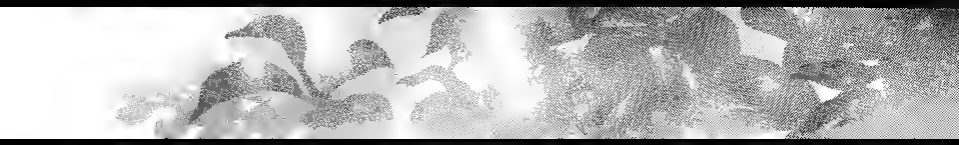
I MEAN, YOU REALLY PERSEVERED, KIRIYAMA! THAT WAS SOME AWESOME ENDURANCE!!
WHEEEEW! YAMAZAKI REALLY WAS GOOD, HUH?!!
YOU REALLY DID GREAT, KIRIYAMA-KUN.
BUT...
WELL OF COURSE WE WERE EXCITED!
ONE OF MY STUDENTS HAD A TITLE RIDING ON THE LINE!
We almost got chased out of the room.
He was cheering and everything
Geez...
HE GOT REALLY EXCITED!
WHEN SENSEI WAS WATCHING THE WEB BROADCAST
.....
What do you mean, "actually"?
Hm? What is this. It's actually pretty good!
AT THAT ∩7-5 FU.. IT LOOKED PRETTY GRIM THEN..
YEAH, BUT STILL
HOW RUDE!
No. I really just need to use the bathroom
YOUR WEIRD COOKING'S CLEARLY GIVING HIM THE RUNS!
HM? WHAT'S WRONG, KIRI-YAMA?
I'M GONNA GO TO THE BATH-ROOM FOR A SEC.
UM

What's going on here...?
When exactly was it
that I emerged to...
such a bright place...
SFX: BASHA BASHA
AND BACK EVERY-THERE ONE'S WAITING FOR ME
DARN IT IT WON'T STOP
ACK!
SFX: ZAAAAAA

I wonder if these things I obtained so quickly

are going to just disappear again really fast?

But at least for now, I'm happy.



I really am...

Yes. Even if they do disappear someday,

I won't forget

that I had days when I was happy.

So that later, again, whenever I want,

I can dig them up

and remember them again.

Chapter 66 END

COMMEMORATIVE MATCHES AND INSTRUCTIONAL SHOGI

The Newcomer King Championship, a shogi tournament sponsored by Shimbun Akahata is a competition with a real history. The winner of this tournament and becomes Newcomer King is allowed to play a commemorative match against the player considered to be the best at that time. But the way, it used to be an official match a long time ago, but not it's treated as an unofficial one. It is of course considered a serious match, but it's also probably considered largely ceremonial.

Shogi is fundamentally a gain about competing to be the winner, but many things also take place for ceremonial reasons. When someone wins the amateur Meijin Championship, they hold a game with the current Meijin who plays down a kaku. They used to be fairly equal, but with the skill of amateurs going up lately they are winning more frequently.

There are matches called the Ou-i and Female Ou-i Hirate Commemorative Matches. Apparently, the woman who was once the long-time Female King-Rank title holder, Shimizu Ichiyo-san, really looked forward to it. I do believe she defeated Yoshiharu Ou-i before.

As for the representative for this ceremonial match, it is decided in "First Play Ceremony" held January 5th every year. This game begins after the players and the staff gather to visit the shrine in front of the shogi building. When that ends, special matches happen with everyone in a special game room in the shogi building. Here they discuss in a large group how to play and take turns which moves to make one at a time. It's purely ceremonial and the games finish part-way through without a winner or loser being decided.

This is a bit of a digression, but once the rule of ending these games unfinished was broken and certain young players continued a game that was supposed to be called off and kept going until victory and defeat were decided accidentally.

When this ends, everyone has a big banquet with drinking. This is the first match of the year, so all the rivals are congenial to each other. This is new years, so the female players appear in kimonos and it turns into a big colorful party in the shogi world.

This First Play Ceremony is also held every year in Osaka, but it's a teensy bit different there. They break into pairs and play on a while bunch of boards lined up next to each other.

If you go to other places, there are commemorative games with the prefecture's Meijin Championship victor and that sort of thing. These, too, are all entirely ceremonial. So even if the players play to the end, there's no real fixation over victory. So sometimes when two players sit down at a board, it is not for a match, but rather for ceremonial reasons.

Chapter 67

Small World

3月のライオン

March comes in like a lion

Chica Umino

ヒョオオオオオオ…
—SO, MM
WHY DON'T YOU DRINK THIS?
IT'LL WARM YOU UP..
HERE.

SFX ZUZU
SORRY... IF I HADN'T GOTTEN SICK
ズズ…
WE WOULD'VE BEEN DOWN THE MOUNTAIN BY THE END OF THE DAY...
I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING BUT WEIGH YOU DOWN
I CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT A BURDEN I'VE BEEN TO YOU, GAKUTO-SAN...
TH-
THANKS, I OWE YOU
OKAY... JUST RAISE YOURSELF UP A BIT MORE
ズズ…
GOHO GOHO
YOU'LL BURN YOURSELF IF IT SPILLS
SFX ZUZU
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN A BURDEN.
ON A MOUNTAIN, EVERYONE ENTRUSTS THE OTHER WITH THEIR LIVES A LITTLE AT A TIME
IF I DIDN'T THINK YOU COULD HANDLE THAT, I WOULDN'T HAVE INVITED YOU IN THE FIRST PLACE
NOT ONLY THAT, BUT I'VE BEEN TRULY MOVED BY ALL THE EFFORT YOU'VE PUT IN TODAY!
URUHH
U……
……
ISSA-KUN!!
IT WAS A GOOD FIGHT OUT THERE,

GAKUTO-SENPAI...
IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU TAUGHT ME, GAKUTO-SENPAI.
YOU TAUGHT ME THAT WHAT MATTERS MOST IS TO NEVER GIVE UP..
SO, ...
I THINK THE ONE WHO WILL BE CONFIRMED AS THE KISHOU CHAMPIONSHIP CHALLENGER TODAY
WILL BE GAKUTO-SENPAI.
Oh no... He's been completely brainwashed...
Sakurai 7-Dan's mountain therapy is terrifying...
ICCHAN
ISSA-KUN IS SO HONEST HE GOT TAKEN OUT IN ONE SHOT
SFX KIRIH KIPPIKI (SHARP, PLAINLY)
SFX LIU HARAHARAS (PIT-A-PAT)
HE INVITES RIVALS OR PEOPLE HE TAKES AN INTEREST IN TO THE MOUNTAINS, THEY GET IN A PINCH, AND HE ENVELOPES THEM WITH KINDNESS TO GAIN THEIR TRUST
AND IT'S ALL NATURAL!!! HE HAS NO ILL INTENTIONS BEHIND IT!!!
Aw, man.
Gakuto's so scaryyy!
His refined behavior and kind smile makes him the No. 1 audience draw in the Shogi World.

Sakurai Gakuto Age 30 B-Class Group 1

APPARENTLY HE INVITED SHIMADA-SAN ONCE TOO.
WELL, THAT'S GAKKUN
FOR REAL?!
YEAH, BUT...
I DOUBT HE'LL HAVE AN EASY TIME WINNING AGAINST SAKURAI-SAN ANYMORE
LOOK AT ICCHAN...
GO GET 'EM, GAKKUN-SENPAI...
ONCE HE ENVELOPES YOU IN THE MOUNTAINS, HE HAS COMPLETE CONTROL OVER YOU SPIRITUALLY ...
SFX FASSA FASSA
UOHH! THAT WAS CLOSE
GARAH
GARAH
MIDDLE SCHOOL AGE
ROCK CLIMBING IN A TRACKSUIT
EVER SINCE HE WAS LITTLE, HE'D BE SENT INTO THE MOUNTAINS TO GET BAMBOO SHOOTS OR EDIBLE PLANTS AND THEY'D TELL HIM "DON'T COME BACK UNTIL YOUR BASKET IS FULL".
SO I THINK how should I put it...
IT WAS KIND OF AN EVERYDAY OCCURRENCE
I think I've had... my fill of them.
Oh, I see ...
SFX BAKKARI (DISAPPOINTMENT)
SFX SAKUHHH
さくっ
HA HA HA
OHH, MOUNTAINS, HUH ..?
I THINK I'VE HAD MY FILL OF MOUNTAINS
AH,
THEY STARTED.
待機会
THE MAN WITH A HEART EVEN A THERAPIST COULDN'T MAKE THEIR WAY INTO!!
HE'S A NATURAL-BORN MOUNTAINEER!!
SO COOOL!!
SHIMADA 8-DAN SURE IS AMAZING!

SFX: PASHI!

BUT IF I TOOK THERE, HE'D COME DOWN WITH 4-2 FU.
IF I WENT WITH SAME KIN TOP, I'D BE HIT WITH 9-7 KAKU AND THEN EVEN IF I BRING MY HISHA IN WITH 8-9 HI PROMOTE, I'LL BE CUT OFF BY THE KAKU WITH 4-2 KAKU PROMOTE AND I'LL GET CRUSHED.

SFX: GARUDOSHAANNN

SFX: PASHIN NYOOON HYOITTO...
SFX: PACHIH... HYOI...
SFX: SUH
SFX: OKYU OKYU
Time for a little break...
EVEN UP AGAINST AN AVALANCHE OF MAJOR PIECES,
HE DEALT WITH IT WITH THE UTMOST COMPOSURE!!
So Coool
Yes... But... For my company, I think I'd prefer that Sakurai 7-Dan won if possible... For the viewership I mean...
Please don't say things like that...
I wonder
You'll be okay, right Gakkun...?
Ze
SFX: ZUZUUUUHHH

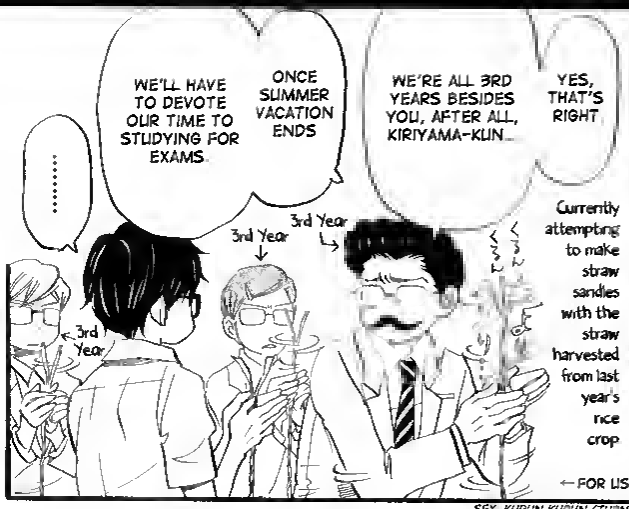
HUH?! WHAT?!
YOU'RE SAYING SHIMADA WON?!
Saku-chan, you're so loud.
Oh, let's just give u~~p
Nobody's gonna come to the Kishou Championship now.
Shimadaa! Geez. couldn't you read between the lines a litt!~e?!
NO, WE DO KNOW...
HE HAS ☖H5-1 FU, THEN AFTER ☗SAME RYUU, HE HITS THE HEAD OF THE KIN WITH ☖4-8 FU
ABOVE ☗SAME KIN, ☖4-5 KOU MEANS BIG TROUBLE
HE'S ALREADY BROUGHT DOWN HIS FU SO HE CAN'T DEFEND
THE CHALLENGER WILL BE SHIMADA!!
HAAAAA
GAKUTO-SENPAI'S RESOLVE TO NEVER GIVE UP IS STRONG!
NO, WE DON'T KNOW THAT YET!!
SURE
OKAY, TOKU-CHAN, LET'S GO DRINKING!!

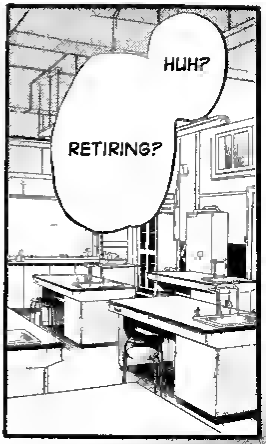
HAAAH.
I'M FINALLY AT THE KISHOU CHAMPIONSHIP WHERE MY 10TH WIN IS ON THE LINE
AND I'M UP AGAINST SHIMADA...
SAKURAI HAS SOME CHARM TO HIM. HE'S STILL YOUNG.
HE WOULD'VE BEEN A BETTER OPPONENT FOR ME ALL AROUND.
BUT, WELL, THINGS DON'T ALWAYS GO THAT SMOOTHLY
HMPH
YOU CAN JUST LEAVE SHIMADA ALONE.
HE'LL START WINNING AGAIN ON HIS OWN.
IT WENT JUST THE WAY GOTOU SAID IT WOULD.
HE MAY HAVE NO CHARM,
BUT HE CAME BACK STRONGER THAN EVER...
10 CAREER WINS OF THE KISHOU CHAMPIONSHIP.
LOOKS LIKE I'VE GOTTA LITERALLY "DEFEND IT TO THE DEATH"...

SFX: PAKYUHH
パキュッ
I DID IT!!
I GOT THE RIGHT TO CONTEND FOR THE TITLE!
BU-HAAA AAAA AAH
ゴキュッ
SFX: NGOKYUN GOKI GOKYUH

THAT REALLY MAKES A DEEP IMPRESSION ON ME
SERI-OUSLY.
—ER
ACT-UALLY
THAT'S NOT A META-PHOR...
Gww— My sto-mach

How could I have forgotten?


WE'LL HAVE TO DEVOTE OUR TIME TO STUDYING FOR EXAMS.
ONCE SUMMER VACATION ENDS
WE'RE ALL 3RD YEARS BESIDES YOU, AFTER ALL, KIRIYAMA-KUN...
YES, THAT'S RIGHT
.....
3rd Year
3rd Year
3rd Year
Currently attempting to make straw sandles with the straw harvested from last year's rice crop
←FOR USE AS SUMMER SANDALS



SFX: KURUN KURUN (TURN TURN) YORI YORI (TWIST TWIST)

I WONDER IF HE'LL BE OKAY?
KIRIYAMA, I MEAN...
HE'D FINALLY STARTED TO CHEER UP RECENTLY.
YOU'RE WORRYING TOO MUCH...
"GAINING" AND "LOSING" ARE THINGS THAT UNAVOIDABLY HAPPEN TO ALL HUMANS...
YOU FEEL HAPPY, FEEL DISAPPOINTED, AND IT REPEATS...
PEOPLE LEARN HOW TO HANDLE THEIR OWN FEELINGS AND KEEP GOING...
DESPAIR AND LONELINESS ARE VITAL HUMAN EMOTIONS...
HAVING THE COURAGE TO REACH YOUR HAND OUT TO NEW WORLDS...
BECAUSE OF "LONELINESS"...
BY DOING THAT, HUMANS...
REACHING THEIR HANDS OUT LIKE BABIES,
MAKE THEIR OWN LITTLE WORLD EXPAND, DON'T YOU THINK?

The Next Day
Sensеeeeeeiii!!!
I'M A STUDENT.
WAAAAH
SFX GASHIHH (GRABB)
Huh? Me? I'm fine.
Even if I'm alone, I can do things like collect notation sheets and examine past data.
Or work on strategies for my next match...
Or I can solve mating puzzles
TOTALLY PLANNING TO HOLE HIMSELF UP IN THE SCHOOL
(Seems to have abandoned thinking about sadness that much)
HEY, SOMEBODY BRING ME SOME PAPER AND A MAGIC MARKER!
HEAPS...
I CAN RESEARCH NEW MOVES OR RESEARCH COUNTER STRATEGIES TO B-5 HI—
THERE'S REALLY TONS OF STUFF I CAN DO ALONE—
I— I SAID I'M FINE.
THOSE ARE NOT CLUB ACTIVITIES!
Let's go put up posters to recruit new students!!
C'mon!!
—But before long we found a solution to the problem.
I'VE NEVER DONE IT.
BUT, WELL,
I WISH YOU THE BEST.
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WE HAD ONE.
HEH? SHOUKA CLUB?
Here you are
THANKS!
I know right?
Good luck.
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS NOW? SOUNDS LIKE IT'LL BE TOUGH.
*They seem to have gone to the student government to get a signature
KIRIYAMA!!
WE'VE GOT SOME PEOPLE THAT WANNA JOIN THE CLUB!

APPARENTLY THEY CAME WHEN THEY SAW THE POSTERS.
MY, YOU MUST BE RELIEVED, YES?
KIRI-YAMA?
UM...
ER..
THEY'RE THE-
THE PRINCIPAL AND THE VICE PRINCIPAL...
AREN'T THEY?
ばーん
SEX: 81.1/N
THE TRUTH IS...
WE DECIDED RIGHT WHEN WE ADMITTED YOU TO THE SCHOOL...
THAT— WE'D TAKE SHOGI LESSONS FROM YOU.

I HAD BEEN TELLING HAYASHIDA-KUN THAT I'D LIKE TO JOIN THE CLUB FOR QUITE SOME TIME NOW...
BUT HE ALWAYS RESPONDED WITH "NOW'S NOT A GOOD TIME." IT WAS RATHER FRUSTRATING.
A-ALSO THE YEAR-HEAD NAKAMURA-KUN SAID HE'D LOVE TO JOIN THE CLUB AS WELL!! ISN'T THAT GREAT?
Actually, he kind of wanted to be the only one taught by Kiriyama and improving (Hehe)
Well... Kiriyama said he didn't want the fact that he was a 'pro' to be too public...
WE DID IT, KIRYAMA-KUN!!
COUNTING HAYASHIDA-SENSEI, THAT MAKES FIVE PEOPLE!!
YOU CAN KEEP THE CLUB GOING AS JUST A SHOGI CLUB!!
.....
AND IT'S FULL OF SUCH MAJOR PLAYERS!!
UM...
BUT...
UM...
IF A CLUB DOESN'T HAVE FIVE STUDENTS, THEN...
A TRIFLE!!
KIRIYAMA-KUN, DO YOU KNOW WHO THIS PERSON IS?! HE'S THE PRINCIPAL!!
Something like that is a piece of cake in a walk in the park for him, don't you know?!
Ah, well it's all about being proactive. For the school I want to make my mark on it, you know?
HA HA HA HA HA

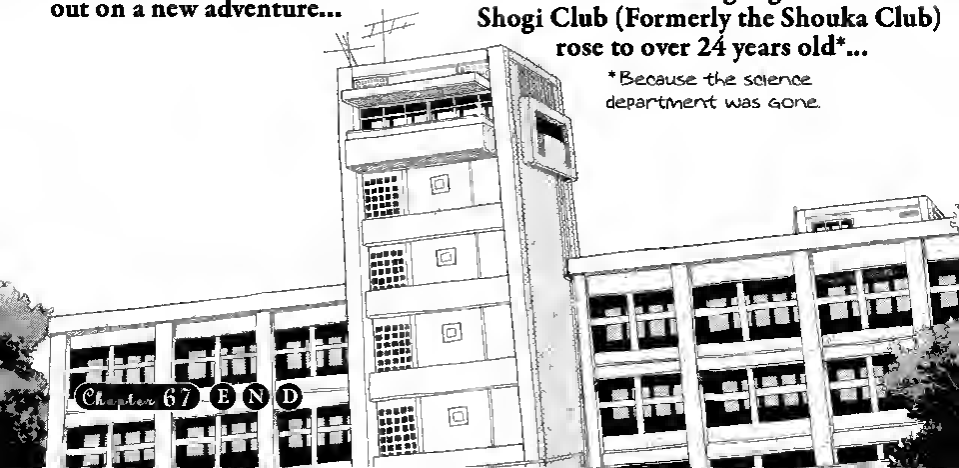
UH, AT THIS POINT... IT'S ACTUALLY LESS OF A SHOGI CLUB... AND MORE OF A SHOGI CLASS, ISN'T IT...?
AND NOW WE HAVE GAINED THE ULTIMATE TEACHER (A PRO 5-DAN).
THERE IS NO DOUBT WE ARE WITHIN RANGE OF THAT.
WOULD LIKE TO REACH B-CLASS IN CREW BATTLES.
WELL, OUR TEAM, THE HA SHIKOU TEAM.

With the joining of some unexpected new club members, the continued existence of the club is decided!!

Kiriyama Rei and his merry comrades have started out on a new adventure...

On that early summer afternoon when the average age of the Shogi Club (Formerly the Shouka Club) rose to over 24 years old*...

*Because the science department was gone.



Chapter 67 END

WHAT HOBBIES DO SHOGI PLAYERS HAVE?!

The world of pro shogi players is a world of battles. A world that really wears on the nerves. So of course they need to take a breather once in a while. Shogi players have a wide variety of hobbies.

Standard things like reading and music are quite common. By the way, my favorites are mystery novels and I read them all the time, but oddly I haven't talked much with other shogi players about what sorts of books they read.

Many players appreciate the classics - Nakahara Makoto the 60th Meijin and Aono Teruichi 9-dan are famous for it. Nakahara-sensei's favorite composer is Mahler. A long time ago, Aono 9-dan participated in the Piece-Clack Concert that takes place at the end of every year wherein people from bands that like shogi perform by facing the orchestra and conducting them, although naturally it was a rather joking thing and he only did it for a short time. In his words he 'wanted to know what it felt like'.

In the Piece-Clack Concert, there are also a lot of players that sing, likewise Sarou Yasumitsu 9-dan's specialty is the violin, and Yauchi Rieko, a 4-dan female player, plays piano. Sarou Amahiko 6-dan is well known for being a lover of classics and frequently attends concerts. As you'd expect with people that are pros at a game there are of course many shogi players that enjoy other games - I believe the most popular one is mahjong. Young or old, it seems that quite a lot of shogi players play mahjong. It's a rather small industry, so they often play by original rules for a 3-person Mahjong (Sanma). Normally Mahjong is a four-player game, but in the shogi world even if they have four people together, they will have one sit out to play Sanma. The reason Sanma is so well liked may be because it is speedier and easier to make flashy yakus than in four-player mahjong.

There are also many players that play go. A while back I wouldn't be surprised if every last player played it. That's perhaps because they learned it in their childhood around the same time they learned how to play shogi. And there are many unusually good shogi players as well. There are also go clubs which have regular meetings once a month where pro go players will come to reach ar

You might not call it a game, but many also seem to like horse racing. The chief among them I'd have to say is Watanabe Akira Ryuuou. He seems to have lots of knowledge on everything about it. Even surprising professional racehorse journalists, apparently.

Perhaps because they're always using their heads in their daily lives, there are many players that like moving their bodies. Some go to the gym, some jog, some like swimming—. A lot like baseball. There's a grass-lot baseball team, too. They're named the 'Kings'. And it goes without saying that it's named after the shogi Oushou.

Chapter 68
Black Mist

—After they got back from the field trip.

the tone of the class went in a slightly stranger direction.

NO...
WHERE IS IT ..?
IT'S GONE...
IT'S NOT HERE...
EXCUSE ME
I CAME TO GET READY FOR CLASS!
WHAT'S WRONG?
OH, YOU'RE THE CLASS HELPER TODAY?
THE CHRONO-LOGICAL TABLE IS MISSING...
CHRONO-LOGICAL TABLE...?
THAT'S THAT SCROLL, RIGHT? THE GREEN ONE...?
YES.
WELL NOW, WHAT DO I DO? NOT HAVING THAT WILL BE A PROBLEM...
JUST WHAT IS GOING ON RECENTLY...?
THIS SORT OF THING KEEPS HAPPENING
—I MIGHT BE IMAGINING IT, BUT I THINK SENSEI HAS LOST A LOT OF WEIGHT...
OH WELL SEEMS THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO
AND THE BELL IS ABOUT TO RING...

SFX PIIN!
THAT'S IT!!
IF IT FELL SOME-WHERE...
YOU'D THINK PEOPLE WOULD NOTICE IT
ERM...
SCROLL SCROLL...
WHERE COULD SOME-THING THAT LONG HAVE GOTTEN TO...
—YES,
NOW, THE DARK AIR HANGING AROUND THE CLASS
HAD EVEN
STARTED TO HAUNT THE TEACHER...
SENSEI, I THINK I KNOW WHERE IT MIGHT BE!
SFX PYUU
HUUH?!
KAWA-MOTO -SAN!
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!!
SFX KIIN KOOHN KAAN ▶
SFX HAA HAAH ▼
キーンコーン
SEN-SE!
OH,
THAT'S GREAT
WHERE WAS IT?
AH, IT WAS MIXED UP WITH THE HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES ROOM.

THANK YOU, KAWAMO-TO-SAN.
YOU FOUND IT FOR ME.
THAT WAS SOME GOOD THINK-ING...
WELL,
I JUST FIGURED IT MIGHT BE THERE SINCE THEY'RE THE SAME SHAPE...
WHISPER...
TRYING TO EARN POINTS...
SURE, THAT'S WHAT SHE SAYS.
BUT KAWAMOTO-SAN
IS PROBABLY THE ONE THAT HID IT
—That voice...
it's Takagi-san.
HEHE
HEHE
HEHE
SHH...

HEY WOULD YOU MIND NOT WHISPERING LIKE THAT,
PURPOSE-FULLY TRYING TO GET PEOPLE TO OVERHEAR YOU INSULTING THEM,
TAKAGI-SAN?
HUH?
I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHIN'
WHAT'S WITH YOU?
AH!
KAWAMOTO-SAN, NO!
KYAAAAHH!
SFX: DANNN
SFX: DAHH

DID YOU THINK I WAS GONNA HIT YOU OR SOMETHING?
.....
WHAT REASON WOULD I HAVE TO DO THAT?
IF I DID, I'D BE DOING JUST WHAT YOU WANTED.
KAWAMOTO-SAN, PLEASE STOP!
WHY WOULD YOU SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
UM, KAWAMOTO-SAN...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN I HID IT?
NOW, FESS UP

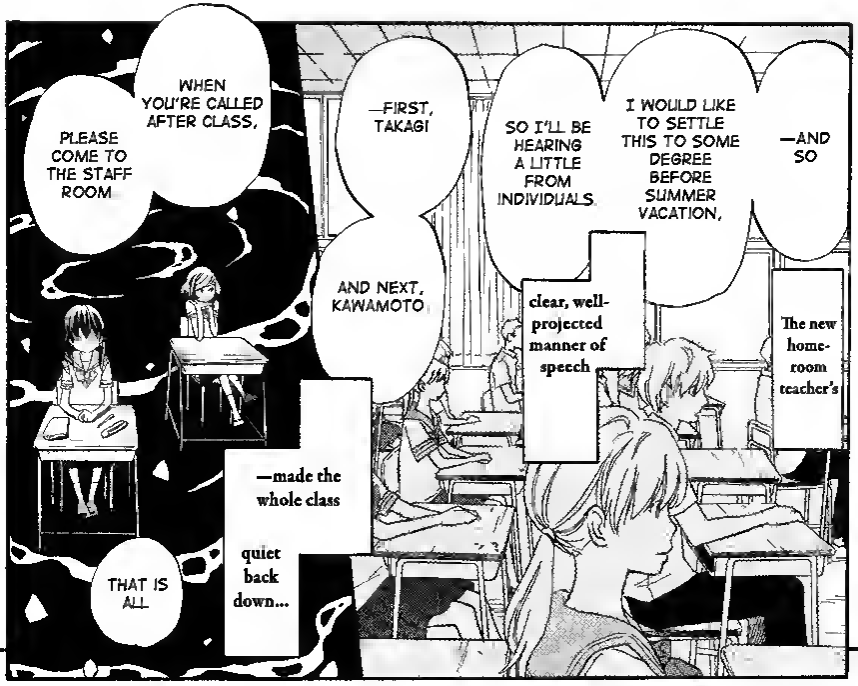
SENSEI...
SENSEI
YOU HEARD HER JUST NOW, DIDN'T YOU?
WHY AM I THE ONE YOU'RE STOPPING?!
DO YOU THINK I HID IT?!
PLEASE, STOP THIS!
PLEASE DON'T YELL!
WHAT DO I DO...
TAKAGI-SAN AND HER FRIENDS HID IT AND THEY'RE TRYING TO PLACE THE BLAME ON YOU, RIGHT, KAWAMOTO-SAN?!
I MEAN, I CAN IMAGINE THAT MUCH...
BUT
SO WHAT ?!
—IT'S NOT LIKE YOU HAVE ANY PROOF.
HOW COULD ANYONE BE EXPECTED TO PROVE THAT?!

HEY, TAKAGI-SAN,
HOW IS IT YOU HAVE TIME FOR THAT?!
PLEASE, FOCUS ON STUDYING AND DON'T BOTHER PEOPLE!
.....
THAT'S ENOUGH... I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE.
PLEASE, DON'T GET ME WRAPPED UP IN THIS...
SFX BUH BUH BUH (MUMBLING)
YEAR AFTER YEAR...
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES MY STUDENTS CHANGE, EVERY TIME
YOU NEVER GET TIRED OF ENDING FRIENDSHIPS AND BULLYING AND WHATNOT...
I'M FED UP WITH IT...
—WHY DO YOU KIDS HAVE TIME TO BOTHER OTHER PEOPLE LIKE THAT?
ARE YOU DENSE OR SOME-THING?!
I MEAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
—GETTING EVERYBODY ELSE MIXED UP IN THIS...
THINK ABOUT HOW YOU'RE DISRUPTING THE CLASS.
YOU ALL HAVE EXAMS THIS YEAR, DON'T YOU?!
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?!

Sensei kept talking like her floodgates had opened.
Then the tone of her voice got strange.
And after she had stopped talking for a bit,
her face went dark
—and she collapsed.
—There was an announcement
that she was hospitalized due to anxiety.
HUH? WHAT?
SO SENSEI IS HOLED UP THERE?
HEY, C'MON! WHAT ABOUT OUR LESSONS?
WE HAVE EXAMS TO TAKE!
And
she never
came back to the school again.

THIS IS SO ANNOYING
—HEY,
WHOSE FAULT IS THIS?
SFX ZAKU ZAKU (MURMURING)
SFX ZAKU ZAKU (MURMURING)
—AND SO
STARTING TODAY, I'LL BE RUNNING THIS CLASS UNTIL A NEW HOMEROOM TEACH IS DECIDED UPON
I'M KOKUBU HEAD OF THE YEAR
SFX ZAWA ZAWA (MURMURING)

SUMMER VACATION IS COMING UP,
SO FOR YOU THIRD YEARS WHO ARE PREPARING FOR YOUR EXAMS,
I'M SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT HOW YOU SPEND THIS SUMMER VACATION
WILL BE A MAJOR CROSSROADS, RIGHT?
—I FEEL BAD FOR ALL OF YOU
HAVING TO GO THROUGH CHANGES IN YOUR HOME-ROOM TEACHER AT A TIME LIKE THIS.
I KNOW A LOT OF YOU ARE UPSET ABOUT ALL THIS,
BUT,
GIVEN THE FACT THAT NOT ONE OF YOU 38, BESIDES THE ONES DIRECTLY INVOLVED,
SAID ANYTHING ABOUT A CASE OF BULLYING SO BAD THAT A PERSON HAD TO CHANGE SCHOOLS,
AND JUST PRETENDED YOU DIDN'T SEE IT HAPPENING THE WHOLE TIME, I'D SAY THIS IS A FAIR TRADE-OFF.


WHEN YOU'RE CALLED AFTER CLASS,
PLEASE COME TO THE STAFF ROOM
—FIRST, TAKAGI
AND NEXT, KAWAMOTO
SO I'LL BE HEARING A LITTLE FROM INDIVIDUALS
I WOULD LIKE TO SETTLE THIS TO SOME DEGREE BEFORE SUMMER VACATION,
—AND SO
clear, well-projected manner of speech
The new home-room teacher's
—made the whole class quiet back down...
THAT IS ALL

Parent-teacher-student meetings.

to try to put the situation in order.

he decided to call each one's parents,

—And so

I HEARD A LOT OF STUFF...
YEAH
BUT
APPARENTLY SENSEI KNEW ABOUT IT THE WHOLE TIME...
BUT SEEING OVER AND OVER AGAIN THAT THERE WASN'T ANYTHING SHE COULD DO,
SHE COULDN'T EVEN BRING HERSELF TO INTERFERE ANYMORE...
AND GETTING ALL DISTRAUGHT WITH EVERY CASE,
HAVING BEEN A TEACHER FOR SO LONG
—AND SEEING THE SAME THING HAPPENING AGAIN AND AGAIN,

I...
TO HAVE YOU COME TO SCHOOL, TOO...
NOW I NEED...
ONE!-CHAN, WHAT DO I DO?
COME HERE
HINA...
MISTER, TWO BEEF CROQUETTES!
OKAY, NEXT
HERE, TAKE THIS !!
ONE PLAIN, ONE DRIPPING WITH SAUCE!
Kay! Glad to be of service!
MEAT HASHIMOTO
Croquette 100 Yen
Cutlet 180 Yen
Minced 150 Yen
ドン
SFX: DON
WITH LOTS OF FRESH CREAM!!
1 CUP OF THE FRENCH TOAST!!

ARE YOU SURE?
YOU ALWAYS SAY NOT TO EAT BEFORE DINNER...
IT'S FINE.
WHEN CAN YOU EAT YOUR FAVORITE THINGS IF NOT AT TIMES LIKE THIS?!!
HINA...
ONEI-CHAN WILL GO.
WHETHER IT'S A STUDENT-PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE OR WHAT,
I'LL ALWAYS BE YOUR ALLY, HINA.
...
MM.

WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR DINNER?
OKAY, LET'S GO SHOPPING AND THEN HEAD HOME.
.....
STEW.
SURE. YOU CAN ADD WHAT YOU WANT TODAY, TOO, ONEI-CHAN.
CAN WE ADD RICE TO IT?
404
Chapter 68 END

3月のライオン

March comes in like a lion

Chica Umino

Chapter 69

Light

I'M GONNA GO...
NO. I WILL.
三日月堂
HOW CAN I NOT GO?!
I'LL GO GIVE THAT MONSTER PARENT A TONGUE LASHING!!
NO!! ON TUESDAY YOUR IMPORTANT CATERING IS SCHEDULED, ISN'T IT?!
ERASHIMA
THAT ALL-IMPORTANT TEA PARTY FOR THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF SHOUEIDOU-SAN, THAT WE OWE SO MUCH TO, RIGHT?
EVERYONE'S LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR CONFECTIONARIES, AREN'T THEY?!!
YOU KNOW THAT BETTER THAN ANYONE!!

I'LL TALK THINGS OUT WITH THE TEACHER,
OJII-CHAN, IT'S OKAY!!
I have to be there for my granddaughter...
I... I... Dammit...
SO DON'T WORRY.
LEAVE THIS TO ME!!
IT'LL BE FINE, HONESTLY!!
I'VE... CAUSED YOU SO MUCH TROUBLE...
AKARI
AKARI
I'M SORRY
DON'T SAY THAT.
IT'LL BE FINE
DON'T WORRY ABOUT HINA AND MOMO

IT'S THAT DREAM AGAIN...
SFX HAHH
IT'S OKAY
I'LL PROTECT THE TWO OF THEM
FOR YOU, MOM.
I CAN'T STAY ASLEEP...
WHAT DO I DO.
I'VE GOT TO CALM DOWN.
THE PARENT-TEACHER-STUDENT MEETING IS TOMORROW.
I WOULD TAKE CARE OF IT
I PROMISED MOM AND OJIICHAN

WELL, THEN,
EXCUSE US
ガラッ
SFX GARAH
OKAY
KAWAMOYO-SAN, PLEASE COME INSIDE
WHAT? WHAT'S WRONG?
KOKUBU-SENSEE-EE!
SEN-SEEEE!
SFX BATA BATA BATA (FRANTIC)
UMADA-KUN WAS FOOLING AROUND AND HE BROKE A WINDOW WITH A MOP!
HUH?! IS ANYONE HURT?
SUZUKI-KUN'S HAND IS BLEEDI~~NG!
HUH?! What did that guy do?!

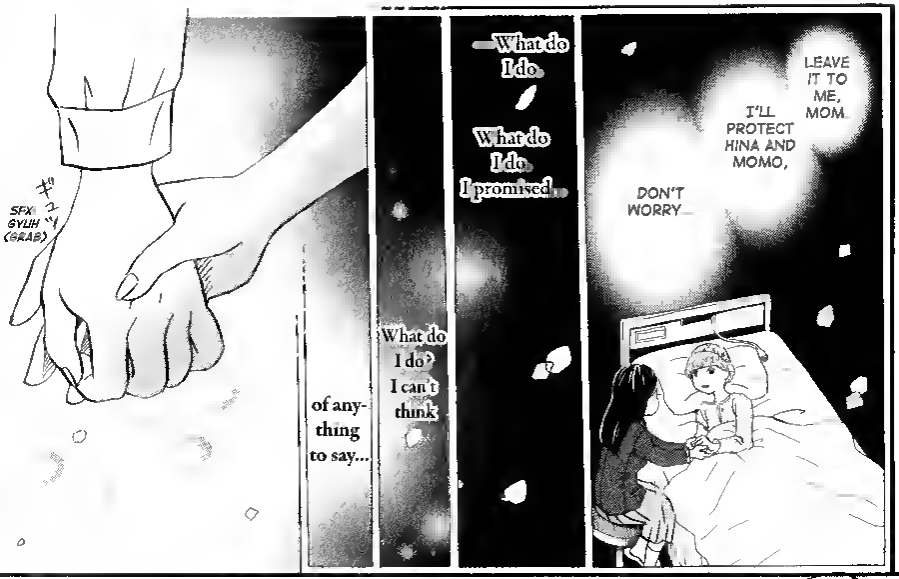
YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO EXCUSE ME FOR A SECOND!!
—KAWAMOTO, WOULD YOU AND YOUR SISTER WAIT INSIDE?
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
Ah, geez
THOSE GUYS ARE NOTHING BUT TROUBLE.
EVEN AFTER I WENT ON AND ON WITH THEM ABOUT HAVING TO SUDDENLY TAKE ON TWO CLASSES.
AH, KIMURA!!
GO ON AHEAD AND TELL THEM NOT TO TOUCH THE GLASS!!
SPY BATA BATA
BATA (RUNNING)
WELL,
WE'LL ALSO BE TAKING OUR LEAVE.
AH, YES!
EXCUSE ME.
AH...
YES, YES.
WELL, OUR THOUGHTS ON THE MATTER ARE.
SEEING AS THE STUDENTS ARE GOING TO BE TAKING EXAMS THIS YEAR NO MATTER WHAT,
THE BEST THING TO DO WOULD BE
TO NOT MAKE ANY SORT OF FUSS.

—MOVING FORWARD
IF YOU WOULD BE MORE CAREFUL WITH YOUR YOUNGER SISTER
EXCUSE ME,
THEN WE WOULD AS WELL....
WOULDN'T YOU SAY?
BUT WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I HEARD ALL I NEED TO HEAR FROM MY DAUGHTER
—WELL, QUITE A BIT
IT SOUNDS LIKE YOUR YOUNGER SISTER IS RATHER PROBLEMATIC.
AND AS FOR US, WELL...
I DO NOT THINK THERE'S BEEN ANY PROBLEM WITH MY YOUNGER SISTER.
—ACTUALLY,
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE REFERRING TO.

THERE'S NO PROBLEM?!
AFTER ALL THE INCRIMI-NATING RUMORS SHE'S SPREAD ABOUT MY MEGUMI?!
WHA...
ARE YOU TRYING TO HARASS ME?!
HOW COULD YOU SAY SUCH AN AGGRAVATING THING?!
TAKAGI -SAN,
DO YOU REGULARLY TALK TO YOUR DAUGHTER?
HAVE YOU MADE SURE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT SHE'S THINKING RIGHT NOW?
IT IS YOUR DAUGHTER THAT HAS BEEN DOING THE BULLYING
Are you getting into an argument?!
Why do you think I went out of my way set separate meeting times dammit?!
Just got back
PLEASE, BE QUIET! I DON'T KNOW HOW ONE COULD RAISE SUCH BLATANTLY FALSE ACCU-SATIONS!!
DO YOU HAVE NO SHAME?!
SFX BATA DADADA

WELL, IN THAT CASE, I'LL HAVE TO ASK.
DO YOU HAVE ANY PROOF?!
IF YOU SAY IT WAS MY DAUGHTER WHO DID IT,
AND I TRUST MY DAUGHTER.
GO AHEAD, PRESENT WHAT PROOF YOU HAVE!
P--
PROOF?
—OTHERWISE, I REFUSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT YOU SAY, WOULDN'T YOU?
AFTER ALL, MY DAUGHTER SAYS SHE HASN'T DONE A THING.

PROOF...?
—PROOF...?
HOW COULD WE...
YES, THAT'S RIGHT. "PROOF"!
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY, DO YOU?
I THOUGHT SO.
THEN WE HAVE NOTHING TO DISCUSS.
IT'S OKAY
IT'S OKAY, MOM


SFX: GYUH (GRAB)
of anything to say...
What do I do? I can't think
What do I do. I promised...
What do I do.
DON'T WORRY...
I'LL PROTECT HINA AND MOMO,
LEAVE IT TO ME, MOM.

COULD WE HAVE A QUICK BREAK?!
MY SISTER ISN'T FEELING HERSELF RIGHT NOW.
SENSE!!! I'M SORRY!!

YOU MUST'VE BEEN NERVOUS.
YOU'RE AS PALE AS A GHOST...
HERE,
DRINK THIS.
IT'LL HELP YOU CALM DOWN.
THANK YOU SO MUCH, SENSEI.
THANK YOU.
I'M SORRY...
I'M SO SORRY, HINA...
I COULDN'T SAY ANYTHING...

TH-
THAT WAS PATHETIC...
I...
I TOLD OJII-CHAN AND MOM
THAT YOU WOULD BE OKAY...
THAT I WOULD TAKE CARE OF EVERY-THING...
O-
ONCE I CALM DOWN
I'LL GO BACK OUT THERE...
I'LL TALK IT OUT
W-
WITH YOUR TEACHER
ONEI-CHAN,
I'M SO GLAD YOU CAME.
YOU JUST BEING HERE AS MY ALLY,
MAKES ME FEEL SO MUCH BETTER!!

ONEI-CHAN,
I UNDER-STAND
THEY PROBABLY WON'T ADMIT IT NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.
THEY DON'T THINK THEY DID ANYTHING WRONG
—AND
IT'LL END UP LIKE WITH CHIHO-CHAN.
ONCE IT'S ALL IN THE PAST,
THEY'LL JUST FORGET ABOUT IT LIKE NOTHING EVER HAPPENED.
—I DON'T HAVE ANY REASON
TO WASTE MY LIFE ON PEOPLE LIKE THEM.

I'M NOT GOING TO JUST STAY QUIET!!
—BUT IF THEY PICK ON ME, I'M GOING TO SAY "STOP"!
I'LL KEEP PUTTING UP WITH BEING IGNORED!!
I'M GOING TO KEEP GOING TO SCHOOL UNTIL IT'S OVER!!
NO MATTER WHAT,
I WIN!
—RIGHT NOW, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS,
AS LONG AS I SURVIVE TO GRADUATION,
HM,
WELL, THAT IS TRUE
AND WITHOUT ANY PROOF WHATSOEVER!
ACCUSING MY MEGUMI OF "BULLYING" OF ALL THINGS
WHAT AN OUTRAGEOUS ACCUSATION
HONESTLY
WHAT DO THEY THINK THEY'RE DOING?

THEY...
DON'T HAVE ANY PROOF.
SFX: GIH
—ACTUALLY IT'S SILLY TO THINK THERE WOULD BE ANY PROOF.
HUH?
ISN'T THAT RIGHT, TAKAGI-SAN?
THE PERSON THAT DID IT WOULD NEVER ADMIT TO IT.
AND THE PEOPLE AROUND THEM
KEEP THEIR MOUTHS SHUT OUT OF FEAR THAT THEY'D BE NEXT.
SO THERE'D NEVER BE ANY PROOF.
THERE'S NEVER
ANY PROOF WHEN IT COMES TO BULLYING.

SO
THE VERY FACT THAT KAWAMOTO HAS SAID THAT "SHE'S BEING BULLIED"
IS ONE PIECE OF PROOF.
THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SAY "BULLYING HAS OCCURRED"
IS THE ONE BEING BULLIED
—IN THAT CASE...
YOU MUST BE JOKING!
THEN...
THEN WHAT IF THE CHILD IS LYING?!
DO YOU HAVE ANY PROOF THAT KAWAMOTO IS LYING?
THAT'S NO PROOF!
—SHE CAN JUST SAY ANYTHING SHE WANTS, CAN'T SHE?!

SO?
.....
DO YOU?
–UNTIL YOU CAN SHOW ME THAT,
THE SCHOOL CANNOT ACCEPT YOUR COMPLAINT.
ONEI-CHAN, IT'S OKAY!!
Nurse's Office
THANK YOU I'M GOING TO DO MY BEST...

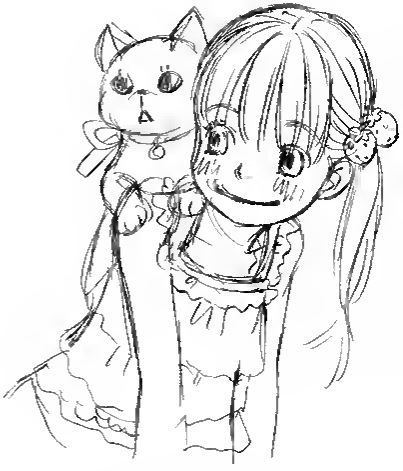
EXCUSE ME.
AH, SENSEI...
THANK YOU, ONEI-CHAN.
I'M SORRY, SENSEI.
UM,
I THINK WE'RE OKAY NOW.
ARE YOU FEELING BETTER, M'AM?
RELAX, RELAX
THAT'S FINE, JUST STAY THERE
UM... SENSEI
I WAS INCREDIBLY RUDE EARLIER,
SO I...

TALK ABOUT WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN MOVING FORWARD.

Chapter 69 END

Chapter 70

Small Palm



3月のライオン

March comes in like a lion

Chika Umino

HEY, SENSEI.
HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA KEEP CALLING ME HERE?
—I MEAN,
I APOLOGIZED, RIGHT?
LIKE, ALREADY.
YEAH...
VERBALLY, YOU DID.

SO I'M REALLY SORRY FOR WHAT I DID
—I GAVE AN APOLOGY AND EVERY-THING
I DID WHAT YOU TOLD ME, SO SHOULDN'T WE BE DONE NOW?
UNDER-STANDING WHAT IT IS YOU DID IS ALSO PART OF IT.
WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF I UNDERSTAND?
WILL SOMETHING CHANGE?
IF SOMETHING CHANGES, WILL SOMETHING GOOD HAPPEN?
HEY, SENSEI.
IF WE KEEP LIVING, ARE GOOD THINGS GOING TO HAPPEN?

MY MOM AND DAD AND EVERYONE,
ALL TELL ME I'VE GOTTA STUDY HARD AND GET INTO A GOOD SCHOOL.
BUT EVEN IF I GET INTO A GOOD SCHOOL,
I DON'T KNOW IF I'LL BE ABLE TO GET ANY JOB AT ALL, LET ALONE A JOB AT A GOOD COMPANY, RIGHT?
THEY ALWAYS SAY "IF YOU WORK HARD, GOOD THINGS'LL HAPPEN", BUT NOBODY REALLY KNOWS, RIGHT?
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S A LITTLE WEIRD TO JUST BE CONSTANTLY SAYING "WORK HARD", "WORK HARD"?
LIKE, EVEN IF YOU WORK HARD YOUR WHOLE LIFE AND IN THE END IT GOES BAD...
NOBODY'S GONNA TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THAT, RIGHT?
—HM, I SEE.
SO YOU'RE SAYING THAT
YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR FUTURE—
AND YOUR PARENTS DON'T UNDERSTAND YOU...
SO?
WHAT ABOUT THAT HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH KARAMOTO OR SAKURA?
ふむふむ
IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THEM AT ALL, DOES IT?
ギッコ ギッコ
SFX: HM HM IKKO IKKO

SO DO YOU THINK YOU COULD STOP THAT "IT'S THE WHOLE WORLD'S FAULT"
SORT OF GENERALIZING ATTITUDE?
If you're gonna say all that, then why don't I start talking to you about the Showa Period 20's?
That was right after the war you know!!
I know. Whenever we tell you kids stuff like this you always say Augh, what does that stuff have to do with what's happening now- right? Geez!!
SENSEI,
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW I FEEL.
Yup.
THAT'S WHY I'M LISTENING.
HOW 'BOUT WE TALK ABOUT IT?

OOOO KAY.
THAT SHOULD DO IT FOR THE PERILLA.
WE CAN PUT THE BASIL RIGHT NEXT TO IT.
——AND LET'S PUT OUT THE MINT SOME-WHERE ELSE.
IT'S GROWING TOO MUCH
OKAY.

—Last week during homeroom

Sensei said in a far-reaching voice:

It was at this point that the class realized

that the school was seriously starting to intervene in the darkness that existed in the class.

That this teacher seemed set on making sure the whole thing was settled.

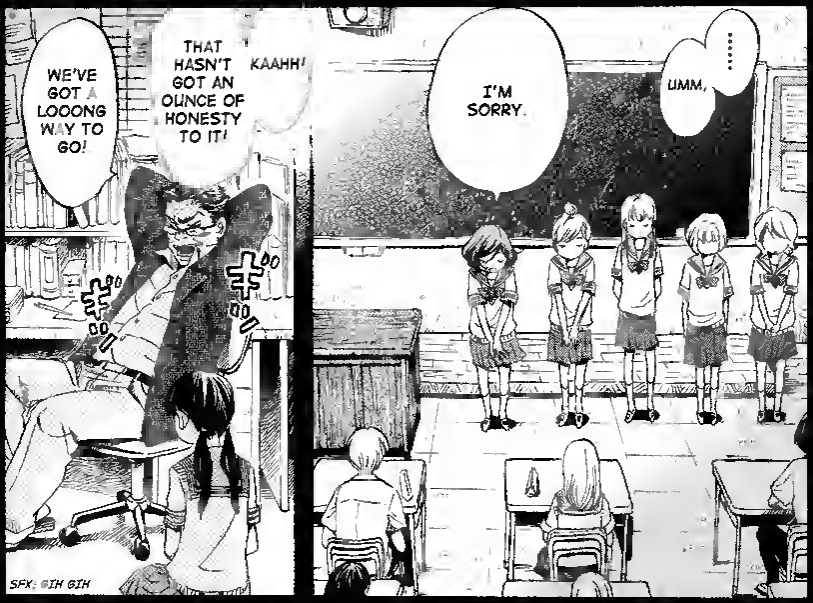
SO,
SPEAKING HONESTLY, WHAT DO YOU THINK
ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE CLASS RIGHT NOW?
SFX: NYAH (GRIN) DONN!
NOW,
OOOO-KAY,
LET'S TRY AND GET STARTED, SHALL WE?

—That the keep-quiet rule that exuded through in this classroom would disappear.

And that spending every day in fear

that "I could end up as the next target" might end.

—And so... the curtain fell.



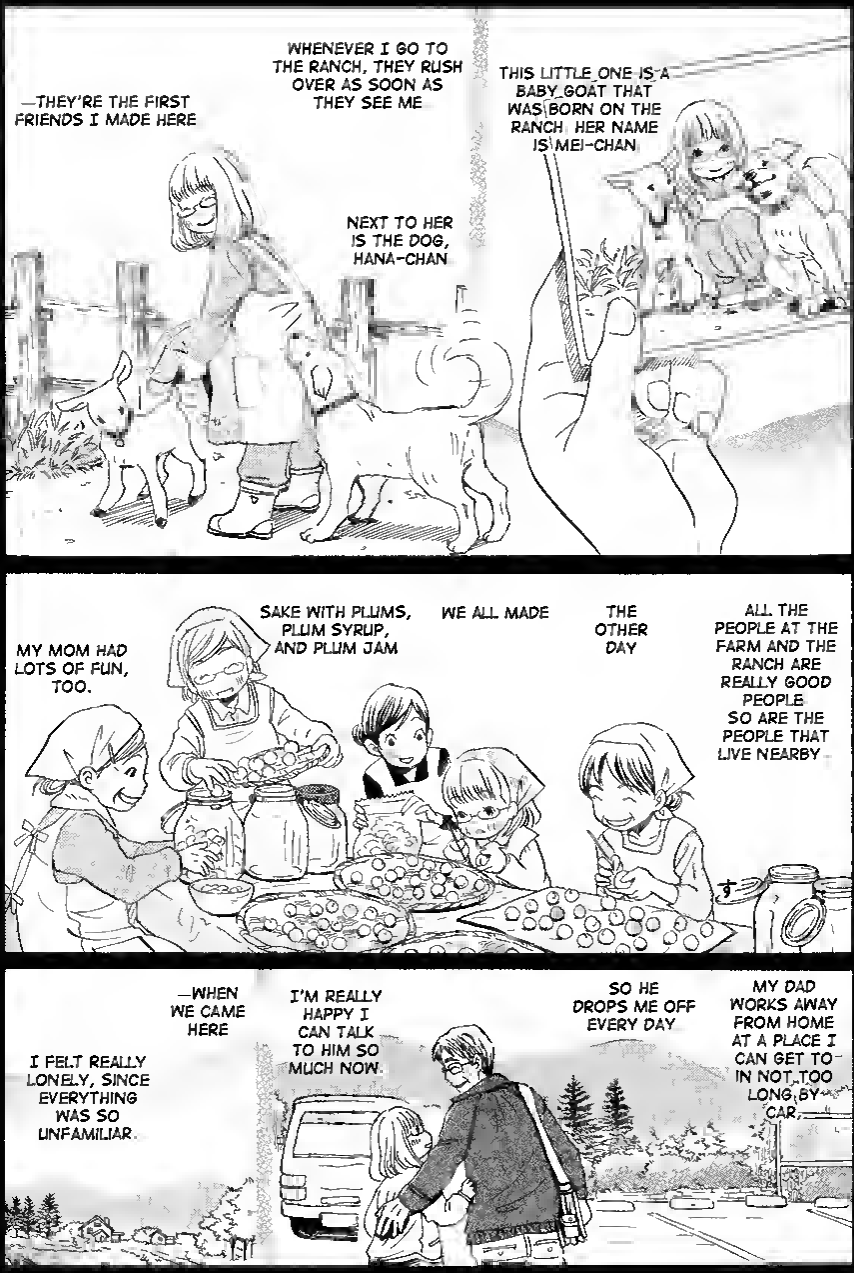
With words that

made it hard to tell if it had fallen at all.

—IF THEY HAVE NO PUNISHMENT AT ALL...
IT'S..
JUST TOO MUCH...
IF IT JUST ENDS UP AS "YOU'LL BE FORGIVEN IF YOU APOLOGIZE"...
WHEN I THINK ABOUT HOW CHIHO-CHAN HAD TO CHANGE SCHOOLS
YOU THINK SHE HAS "SYMPATHY"...?
I DON'T THINK SO.
I DON'T THINK THAT'S REALISTIC. SHE SOUNDS MORE LIKE...
IN-SINCERE,
MAYBE...
SHE'S THINKING MORE LIKE...
DO I REALLY HAVE TO?
OR SOMETHING
.....
"EDUCATION"...?
"EDUCATION" I THINK IS A GOOD WAY OF SAYING IT...

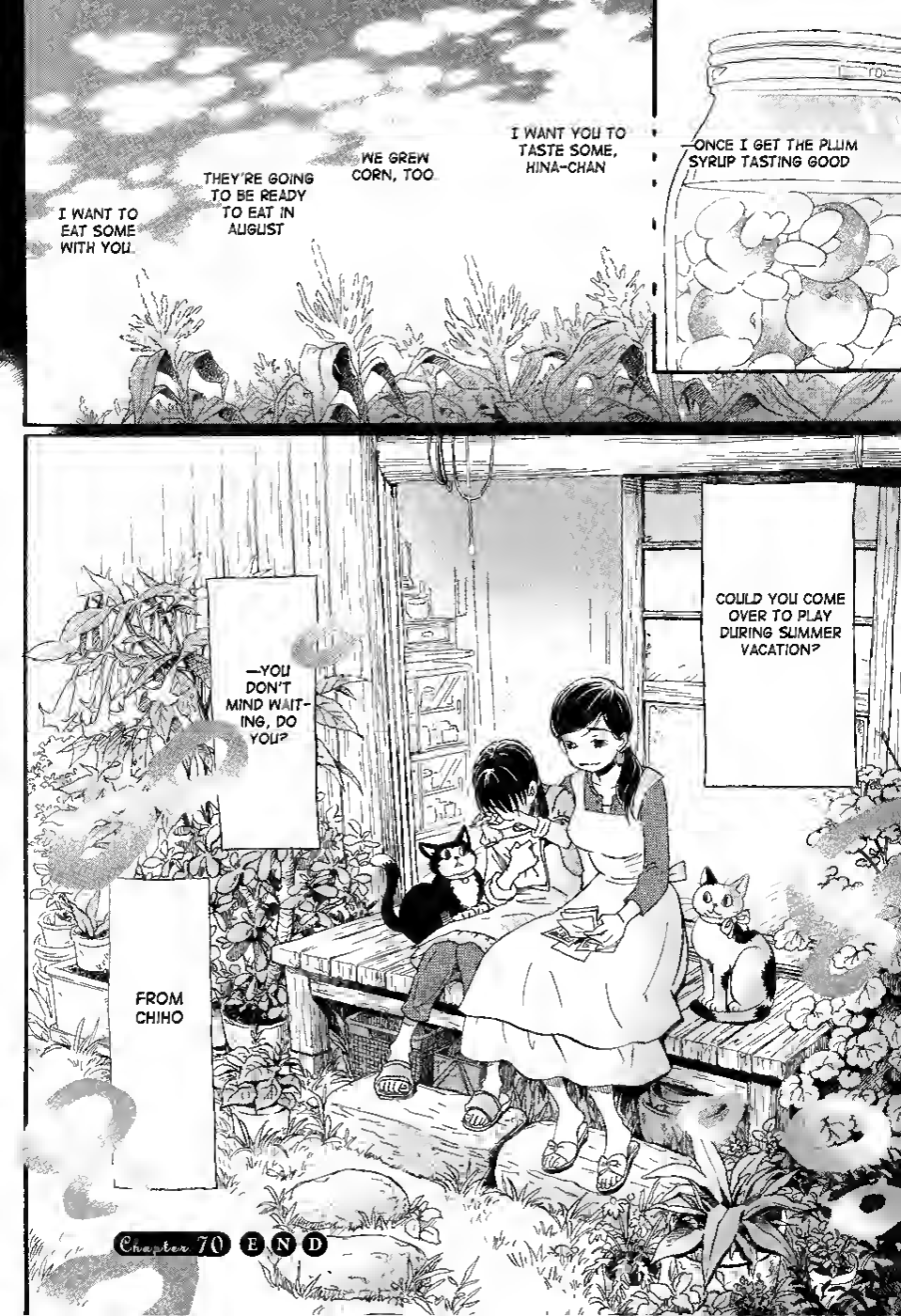
—IT MEANS "TO TEACH"
AND "RAISE" ...
THE JAPANESE WORD FOR EDUCATION (教育) MEANS TEACH AND RAISE
WITHOUT THE "RAISE" KANJI (育)
IT GETS THROWN WAY OFF.
SFX. BURORO... KATAN
SFX. TOYOYO

IT'S FROM CHIHO-CHAN!!
—HINA-CHAN,
I'M SORRY FOR TAKING SO LONG TO REPLY.
HINAAA!
!!
IT'S A QUIET, PRETTY PLACE THAT'S SURROUNDED BY MOUNTAINS AND FORESTS.
NEXT TO THE CENTER IS A RANCH AND A FARM.
THEY LET ME HELP OUT THERE EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.
I'M CURRENTLY STUDYING WITH A TEACHER
AT A PLACE CALLED THE "HEART CARE CENTER".


—THEY'RE THE FIRST FRIENDS I MADE HERE
WHENEVER I GO TO THE RANCH, THEY RUSH OVER AS SOON AS THEY SEE ME
NEXT TO HER IS THE DOG, HANA-CHAN
THIS LITTLE ONE IS A BABY GOAT THAT WAS BORN ON THE RANCH. HER NAME IS MEI-CHAN
MY MOM HAD LOTS OF FUN, TOO.
SAKE WITH PLUMS, PLUM SYRUP, AND PLUM JAM
WE ALL MADE
THE OTHER DAY
ALL THE PEOPLE AT THE FARM AND THE RANCH ARE REALLY GOOD PEOPLE. SO ARE THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE NEARBY.
I FELT REALLY LONELY, SINCE EVERYTHING WAS SO UNFAMILIAR.
—WHEN WE CAME HERE
I'M REALLY HAPPY I CAN TALK TO HIM SO MUCH NOW.
SO HE DROPS ME OFF EVERY DAY
MY DAD WORKS AWAY FROM HOME AT A PLACE I CAN GET TO IN NOT TOO LONG, BY CAR.

"FIRST, LET'S MAKE FRIENDS WITH ANIMALS."
THEN SATOU-SENSEI FROM THE CENTER
TAUGHT ME SOMETHING CALLED "THE THREE STEPS OF MAKING FRIENDS".
"ONCE WE DO THAT,
LET'S MAKE SOME OLDER FRIENDS..."
—AND TODAY

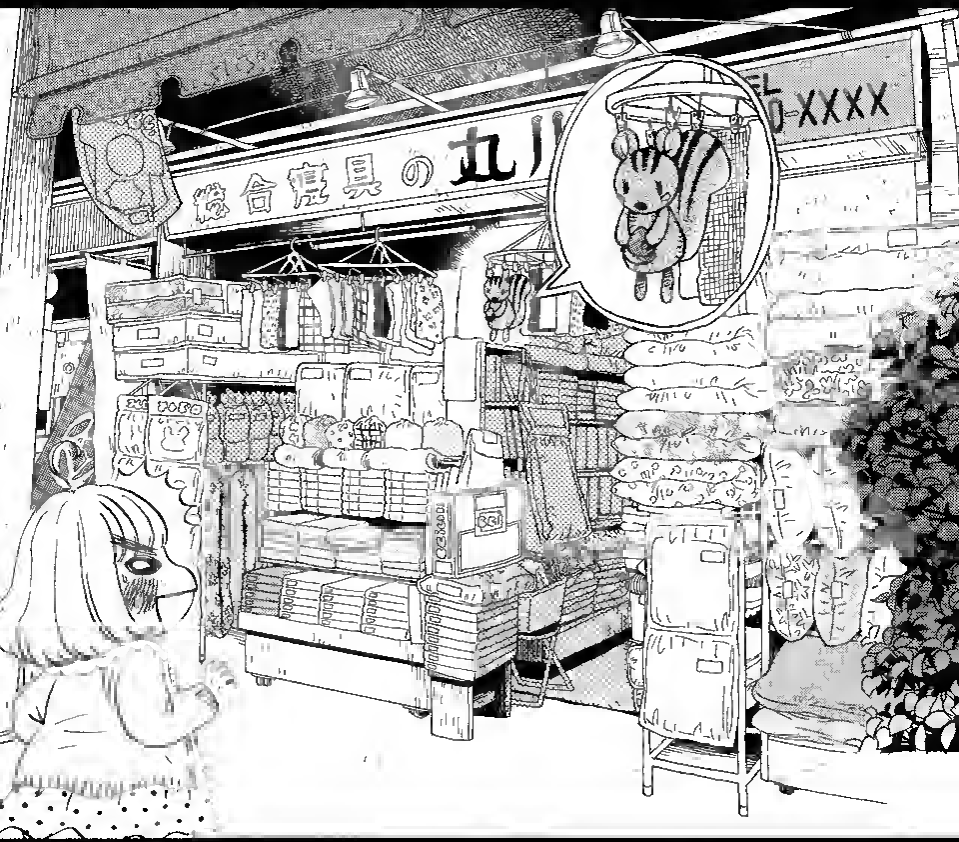
—WHEN I HEARD THAT
THE THIRD STEP IS "MAKE A FRIEND WITH SOMEONE YOUR OWN AGE."
SENSEI TOLD ME "LET'S MOVE ON TO THE THIRD STEP."
YOUR FACE POPPED INTO MY MIND.
STARTED TO MISS YOU.
REALLY
AND I REALLY,


I WANT TO EAT SOME WITH YOU.
THEY'RE GOING TO BE READY TO EAT IN AUGUST
WE GREW CORN, TOO.
I WANT YOU TO TASTE SOME, HINA-CHAN
ONCE I GET THE PLUM SYRUP TASTING GOOD
COULD YOU COME OVER TO PLAY DURING SUMMER VACATION?
—YOU DON'T MIND WAITING, DO YOU?
FROM CHIHO

Chapter 70 END

Chapter 71

Sunny Place

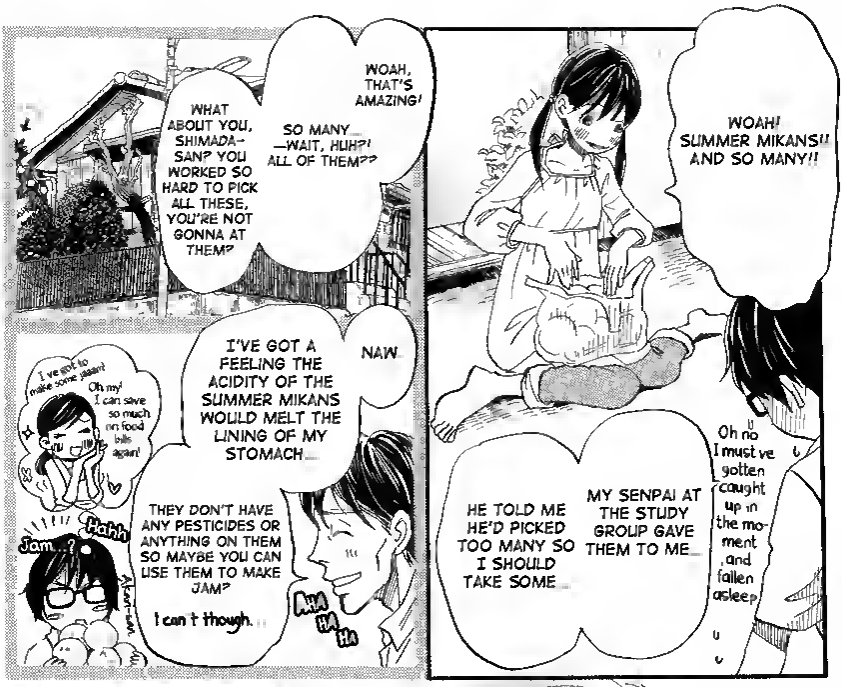


HELLOOO!
PARDON THE IN-TRUUU..
SION..
ガラ?。
SFX: GARARA—

SFX SHUU... SUU...
She's sleeping...
Tried just sitting down for now...
HEAVE-HO
*Doesn't seem to know if it's okay to enter a room a girl is sleeping in.
Sort if in, sort of out
SFX KASA

SFX PEROPERO (LICK LICK) SUUU SUUU
I wonder why.
The air around her feels soft for the first time in a while.
It's like she's
faintly
glowing...

REI-CHAN!
.....
REI-CHAN!
I kind of feel
like I want to look at this
forever...
WAAHH!
MAU
Looks like he fell asleep at some point
REI-CHAAN!


WOAH! SUMMER MIKANS!! AND SO MANY!!
Oh no I must've gotten caught up in the moment, and fallen asleep
MY SENPAI AT THE STUDY GROUP GAVE THEM TO ME...
HE TOLD ME HE'D PICKED TOO MANY SO I SHOULD TAKE SOME...
WOAH, THAT'S AMAZING!
SO MANY... —WAIT, HUH?! ALL OF THEM??
WHAT ABOUT YOU, SHIMADA-SAN? YOU WORKED SO HARD TO PICK ALL THESE, YOU'RE NOT GONNA AT THEM?
NAW...
I'VE GOT A FEELING THE ACIDITY OF THE SUMMER MIKANS WOULD MELT THE LINING OF MY STOMACH...
I've got to make some jam! Oh my! I can save so much on food bills again!
Jam...?
Hehh
THEY DON'T HAVE ANY PESTICIDES OR ANYTHING ON THEM SO MAYBE YOU CAN USE THEM TO MAKE JAM?
I can't though...
HA HA HA

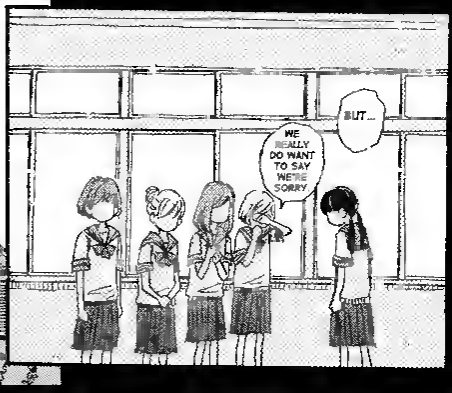
—She really does have this dim glow...
.....
I wonder why?
WHAT A NICE SMELL...
THIS IS GREAT!
ONEI-CHAN'S MARMALADE IS SO DELICIOUS

IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S OVER...
HEY, UM...
KIRIYAMA-KUN...
—Oh...
HUH...?
I see.
This is...
PROBABLY
I THINK IT'S OVER...
what that light's about, huh...?

AND KUDOU-SAN...
KIUCHI-SAN, KOBAYASHI-SAN,
I MADE THEM WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF MY GROUP
AT MY CLASSMATE KAWASHIMA-SAN'S HOUSE YESTERDAY
I MADE THEM
AREN'T THEY CUTE?
KA-WAMO-TO-SA N,
HEY, UH, WE'RE GOING TO KAWASHIMA-SAN'S HOUSE TO MAKE COOKIES TODAY
...YOU WANNA COME?
HUH?
UM
W... WE WERE SCARED, SO...
WE'RE SORRY!
WE COULDN'T DO ANY-THING...
WE... KNOW YOU MIGHT NOT FORGIVE US EVEN IF WE APOLOGIZE NOW, BUT...

—Then we changed clothes

And met back up at Kawashima's house.



—And laughing the whole time, we reached a point where we said, "But these freshly baked ones sure are good!"

The cookies we finished were misshapen and hard

So we ate lots and lots of them

—I wonder why?
KIRIYAMA-KUN, DID YOU KNOW? WHEN YOU PUT FRESHLY BAKED ONES
THEY BURNED THE INSIDE OF MY MOUTH
The cookies we bought were way, way tastier, but for some reason we had so much fun, they tasted really good and made us really happy.
RIGHT IN YOUR MOUTH, THEY GO "SZZZZL"?
HEY!
Seeing her say that, innocently opening her mouth,
and her tongue, I
and seeing the sun
hit her teeth
was sort of
filled with all kinds of emotions.
and I wanted to cry.
Like my chest was in pain
HINA-CHAN, I'M SORRY.

I promised to protect you, after all.
Back then, right here,
—That's right.
IN THE END...
I...
I REALLY COULDN'T DO ANYTHING TO HELP.

NOTHING...?
.....
.....
BUT KIRI-YAMA-KUN,
.....
-YOU TALKED TO ME
SO,
SO...
MUCH, DIDN'T YOU?

YOU EVEN WENT ALL THE WAY TO KYOTO TO LOOK FOR ME, DIDN'T YOU?
NO "STILLS"!
AT THE END OF THE DAY, NOTHING I
STILL,
HUH...?
DON'T YOU REMEMBER HOW HAPPY I WAS?!
Oww
SFX: GARUHH (CHOMP)
SFX: GARTH
OW! OW!
KIRIYAMA-KUN, YOU IDIOT!
NO "BUTS"!
B-
BUT I

After she said that, she pulled my hand like in a dance

and she started pulling me steadily.

—And...

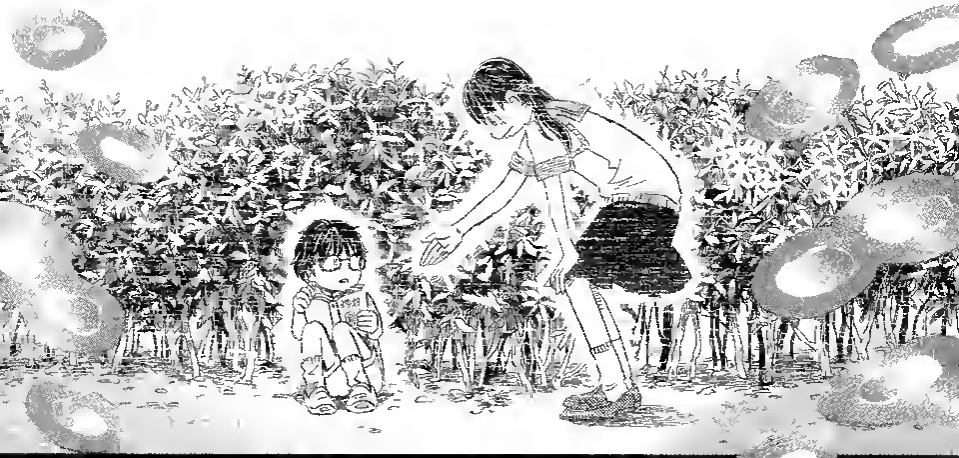
in my heart

one more time

I vowed loyalty

to that brave little girl

that would never bend her will



no matter how much she cried or how much it hurt.

Chapter 71 END

THIS AND THAT ABOUT TITLE MATCHES...

Title matches are the splendor of the shogi world. Local government and TV stations work together to make them really exciting huge events, but it does not always go that way. Sometimes they are very compact events, for example all title matches across the country that take place in the shogi association buildings are quite dry events. Many shogi players will gather into the waiting rooms, but most of these such matches have no events aimed towards amateur fans (with the exception of the staple big-board commentaries). It sure is interesting that the title matches that take place at shogi headquarters are dull ones, isn't it?
Generally speaking, in shogi tournaments, the first game, the opening game, seems to very often have a big show to it. And as the game number progresses and the games get into the second half, it frequently gets duller. This is a quality of all many-game series because since the match may just end suddenly in the latter half, the sponsors don't plan big events for then in case it all goes to waste.

While title matches have a big night-before party, both players can't afford to greet people, talk with people, and relax to enjoy a meal. What they do is right after the night-before party, they have a dinner meets in separate rooms with only their inner-circle. While the two of them sometimes in separate rooms, generally they hold the banquet in the same room together. But the two competitors are never sitting next to each other, observers will be seated between them. I've experienced it many times myself, and it's not all that tense, it's a rather harmonious affair. There's a lot of non-stop drinking involved, too. I suppose you've got to expect it with so many observers, other shogi players, journalists and other staff that have many big drinkers among them all there. The players themselves will frequently do some small degree of drinking as well. Even after those parties end, the staff along will go to an after party and on very rare occasions there's even an after-after party. Sometimes one of the competitors may unexpectedly show up at an after party. Of course, some players will never show up at them, that sort of thing just depends on the individual's personality.

After a safe completion of a match, or after reaching the pause point, there is a closing party. These, too, are sometimes flashy and sometimes have a much more homelike atmosphere. The players themselves will drink here frequently. The whole thing being over at this point, of course. It's not infrequent for everyone to really get talking and for the party to not break up until after midnight. And times when the two competitors get drunk are — as you'd expect, not too frequent. But while they are in serious matches when sitting in front of the board, once they get away from them they are with faces they've known since they were kids. And if they're close, especially during times of title matches, these parties have a very warm atmosphere about them.

Chapter 72

Flowing Thing

将棋会館
Meijin
Souya Touji
The challenge match
To a beautiful future.
The 43rd Newcomer Championship Commemorative Match
The Heisei Year 23 Newcomer King
Kiriyama Rei 5-Dan

I ASKED THE DESIGNER TO MAKE SOMETHING COOL!!
I GOT IT DONE AT THAT NAWATA KOUHEI OFFICE
The relief printer!!
And I held out a tiny bit on the printing!
DON'T TELL US THAT, TOKU-CHAN!
将棋会
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? WHY DID A CRAZY POSTER LIKE THIS GET MADE?
BUT THIS IS JUST A SIMPLE COM-MEMORATIVE MATCH BETWEEN A NEWCOMER KING AND A MEIJIN, RIGHT?
WHAT'S EVEN GOING ON HERE? THE DESIGN IS SO COOL
WHAT IS THIS... WHAT IS THIS POSTER?
I KNEW YOU GUYS HAD AN EYE FOR THIS SORTA THING!!
HEY! NOTICED, DID YA?! AIN'T IT AWESOME ?!
ビシッ☆
IT'S MADE OF INSANELY GOOD PAPER AND THE LETTERS LOOK LIKE THEY'RE FLOATING ON TOP OF THE IMAGES...
AND THERE ARE... MATTE PARTS AND SPARKLY PARTS, TOO, AREN'T THERE...?
Were these specially manufactured..?
SFX: BISHIIH
clearly gigantic!!
Also... Er, well, the picture of the hotel it's being held at is ...um...
Also... How do I say this... This probably isn't professionally printed, but rather just printed from a computer printer ...
Just lined up all the needed information
The Tranquil Inn
Hotel Shiroizumi
The 33rd Kishou Championship
I mean, this is our poster, right?! When were these photos taken? They're oddly grainy!
When are those photos you used from?!
Hmm
SFX: JIMIIIN (DULLL)
HARAHARA HARAHARA (TEARS FLOWING)

WE'RE IN A RECESSION! WE CAN'T GET SPONSORS SO WE'RE BARELY SCRAPING BY!!
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?!
MY ETERNAL KISHOU TITLE IS ON THE LINE YOU KNOW!
GYAAAA
Just because Kiriyama and Souya are a bit young and kinda cute?! So that's how you treat them?!
How could you ?!!
And the poster size sure seems small!
KWOOH
Chronic Gastritis (Just before a stomach ulcer ☆)
THE ☆ BATTLE OF THE SICK PATIENTS
A Step Away from Senile Pneumonia
Buhoh Gehoh
Gehuo Gehuo Gohuh Gohuuh Gehuo
Gehoh Gehoh
VIDEO RECORDING
WHAT EVEN WAS THAT? THE BATTLE OF THE SICK PATIENTS?!
YOU TWO HAVE WAY TOO POOR HEALTH!!
ANYHOW, WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT FIRST GAME?!!
NOBODY'S GONNA COME TO SEE THAT! BOTH YOUR PHYSICALITY AND PLAY WERE RICKETY!
No Response
No, it's not! Or rather, that's supposed to be like that!
Gyoku head... The gyoku's "Head" is a bit thin, isn't it?!
Gehoh Gohuh I-isn't Shimada's gyoku-head looking a bit thin?
ON TOP OF THAT, IT WAS AN UGLY PSYCHOLOGICAL BATTLE!

THIS... IS "BAD", ISN'T IT?
5-1 GIN LEFT?
HUH? 5-1 GIN LEFT?
WHOA, SHIMADA 8-DAN... NOW OPTS FOR 5-1 GIN LEFT!!
JUST BETWEEN ME AND YOU... THIS REALLY LOOKS LIKE A LOSING MOVE TO ME...!
Huh?!
WE HAD THIS AT-HOME FEEL WATCHING IT, SO WE ACTUALLY GOT REALLY EXCITED (WITH A SMALL NUMBER OF PEOPLE)
IN RECENT YEARS, IT'S NORMAL TO JUST MAKE YOUR MOVES QUIETLY!!
WHAT WAS THAT?! WHAT KIND OF SCENE OF CARNAGE WAS THAT!?
Grumbling and teeth grinding and abusive language!!!
WHAT ERA IS THIS SHOGI FROM?! THE SHOWA ERA? ARE YOU GUYS STUCK IN THE SHOWA ERA?!
T/N THE SHOWA ERA IS FROM 1926 TO 1989
That's no good, right?! I think he's screwed now!
It's true!
5-1 Gin Left?!
For real?!
*It seems that so few people were at the big board commentary room that everyone could sit in a circle
Internet
VIDEO RECORDING REPLAY
YEAH...
The person that did the big board commentary
IT WAS KIND OF EXCITING WATCHING THE GAME STREAMED OVER THE INTERNET THOUGH
SFX ROSO (WHISPER)
IT'S MY FAULT?!
IF GAKUTO WERE THE CHALLENGER, THEN WE'D HAVE FEMALE FANS SWARMING THE PLACE!!
Shit! It's all your fault, Shimada!!
KIIH
HUUUH?!
I'll be waiting for you.
The Bus Kishou Championship Spectator Tour
Lunch party with both competitors included
LOOK AT SOUYA AND KIRIYAMA!!
IF THAT'S FRUSTRATING YOU, THEN GET YOUR HEALTH BACK AND GO GET US SOME SPONSORS!!
Look how popular they are!!
日景観光 さくら観光
出版 書店 カス子
President's Hand
ズラーッ
SFX ZURAAAHH

IT'S TRUE THAT OUR PHYSICALITIES ARE PRETTY CRAPPY.
AND THAT GAME ITSELF WAS UNBELIEVABLY AWFUL.
BUT WHATEVER SORTA MATCH IT IS, A WIN IS A WIN.
MINE, THAT IS
AND...
将棋会館
YOU CAN BET NEXT TIME WILL BE MY WIN, TOO.
THE KISHOU TITLE IS ONE THING I'M NEVER HANDING OVER TO ANYBODY- IT'S MY LIFEBLOOD.
YANAGI-HARA-SAN...
SO THIS IS THE ONE TITLE I'M NOT LETTING GO OF!
I'M HOLDING ONTO IT IF IT KILLS ME!!
SOUYA IS POURING ALL HE HAS INTO THE MEIJIN CHAMPIONSHIP, AND OTHER PEOPLE AREN'T PAYING MUCH ATTENTION TO IT.
FAREWELL, GENTLEMEN!!
HA HA HA HA
HA HA HA HA
HUUUH?
Could you be any more blunt?!
Did you think that would sound cool or some-thing?!
Go home already! Get some rest, would you?!

HEY, YOU TWO,
KEEP FIGHTING LIKE THAT.
I'LL BE USING THESE POSTERS TO GET PEOPLE EXCITED.
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
Souya and Kiriyama's posters
BUT, YOU KNOW, PRESIDENT,
GO A BIT EASIER, WOULD YOU?
ON SOUYA AND KIRI-YAMA, TOO.
I DON'T THINK THEY'RE REALLY ALL THAT GOOD AT BEING FRONT AND CENTER
I KNOW
I'VE KNOWN SOUYA FOR A WHILE, TOO. I KNOW THAT MUCH ABOUT HIM
I'M NOT GONNA KILL THE GOLDEN GOOSE

—YEAH SO KIRI-YAMA—
IS FINALLY GONNA COLLIDE
—WITH SOUYA—
HEY, KIRI-YAMA
THERE YOU ARE

ガバッ
Souya Touji
SFX: GYUH... (SQUEEZE) BOTAH
ギュッ
Not on the notations!
AHHH!
He didn't hear me at all
LOOKS LIKE HE'S REAAALLY CONCENTRATING
ARE YOU GONNA WEAR A KIMONO AND THAT SORTA THING?
AH, NO. THE PRESIDENT SAID MY UNIFORM IS FINE
AH, SENSEI
YES THERE ISN'T ALL THAT MUCH TO PREPARE
YOU ALL READY?
HEY, KIRIYAMA, THAT COMMEMORATIVE MATCH IS MORIOKA, RIGHT?
SFX: PAN PAN
UM... YES
BUT IT SORT OF DOESN'T FEEL REAL
YOU NERVOUS?

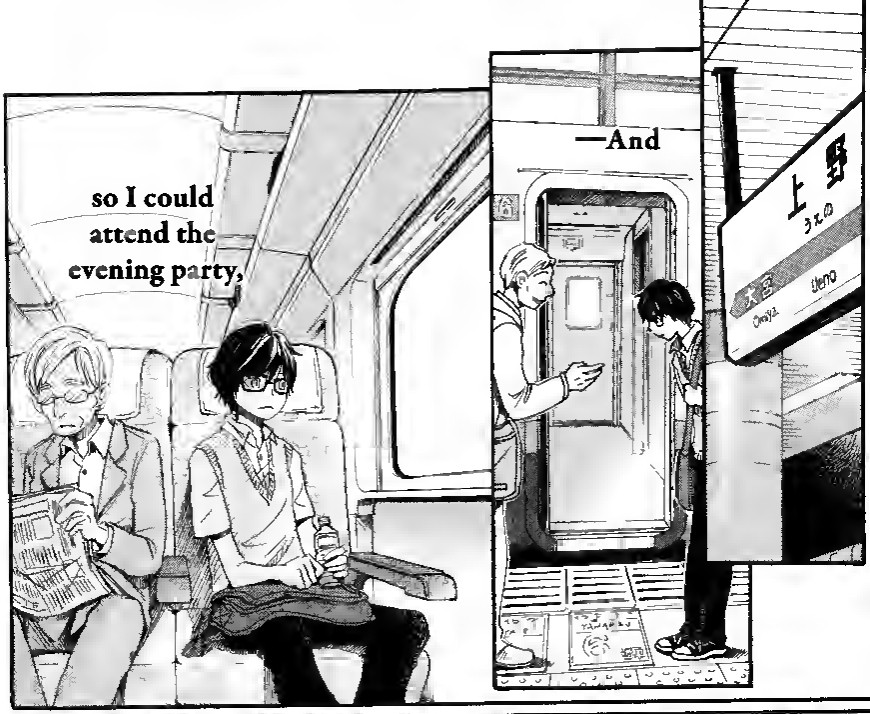
OH, I SEE...
SO THEY RESOLVED IT, HUH?
YES
OH, RIGHT...
SENSEI...

LIKE SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING ANYMORE...
SO NOW SHE CAN RELAX LIKE THIS
AND GET SOFT...
IT'S KIND OF LIKE...
SHE HAS A TOTALLY DIFFERENT ATMOSPHERE ABOUT HER...
LIKE...
SORTA FLUFFY, OR SOMETHING...

...YOU MUST BE GLAD, KIRIYAMA
UM... WELL, SENSEI, I
DON'T THINK THAT I REALISTICALLY WAS ANY USE TO HER IN THE END
——IT REALLY MAKES ME WONDER HOW AWFUL SHE MUST'VE BEEN FEELING FOR SO, SO LONG...
HUH?
AND HOW DID SHE RESPOND?
UH, YES...
HUH? WELL...
.....
DID.. YOU SAY THAT TO HER?

SHE SAID, "THAT'S NOT TRUE,"——
RIGHT?
.....
UM,
YES
I'VE BEEN LISTENING TO EVERYTHING YOU'VE SAID, REMEMBER?
OF COURSE I COULD TELL THAT
HUH? BUT SENSEI,
HOW ..
IS SUCH AN UPRIGHT GIRL THAT UNDERSTANDS ALL KINDS OF THINGS...
AND ABOUT HOW HINA-CHAN
ABOUT HOW YOU WERE PUTTING EVERYTHING YOU HAD INTO HELPING HER,

THE WORLD DOESN'T RUN PURELY ON RESULTS.
IT'S NOT JUST RESULTS THAT REACH PEOPLE
RESULTS ARE IMPORTANT, BUT...
—KIRIYAMA,
THANKS
GOOD LUCK IN THE COMMEMORATIVE MATCH.



I met up with people from the newspaper company and the association

and got on a shinkansen.

——And not too far from me

he looked as silent as the bottom of a pond.
—Seeing his profile with his eyes closed...

—Quietness and a violent storm...
That was
the beginning of those four days I could never have imagined beforehand.
ホテルパトイン
Chapter 72 END

RYOKANS AND HOTELS FREQUENTLY USED FOR TITLE MATCHES

Shogi is a traditional part of Japan's culture. One could say that the practice of playing title matches while wearing kimonos in Japanese-style rooms is a transmission of that culture. Regarding the locations where the title matches take place, they are sometimes said to be places that those on the sponsor side are interested in. Specifically, they're decided so people will think of that particular place when they think of a that particular shogi tournament.

One famous place that comes to mind is 'Jinya', located in Kanegawa Prefecture. This ryokan is where Masuda Kouzou caused the famous 'Jinya Incident' and it where the Ou-i Championship is frequently held. At the Shogi City, Tendou, has an image for being the location of the 'Taki no Yu Hotel' where the Ryuu-ou Championship is frequently held. 'Ginpa Villa' in Aichi Prefecture has an excellent unbroken view of Mikawa Bay and is very popular among shogi players.

The Female Shogi Competition the Kurashiki Fujihana Championship is, as you would expect, a competition held by the city of Kurashiki in Okayama Prefecture. And the 2nd game of every year, and also the 3rd and definitive game if it's one-win one-loss each, is held in Kurashiki. By the way, the mateh is open to the public so lots of fans flock there. Shimizu Ichiyo 6-dan, the person that has held the Kurashiki Fujihana title for a very long time, even calls Kurashiki her second home.

Also among the female shogi competitions is the Female Oushou Championship which, due to its sponsor being Miyazaki Prefecture's Kirishima Sake, the first match of the competition takes place in that area. And this is a bit of a digression, but I've heard that when one takes the Female Oushou title, they receive one large-sized sho bottle of shochu. So once when I held a party at my house, the current title holder at the time arrived carrying one of those huge bottles. This is extremely rare, but sometimes games take place in famous shrines and temples. They are held in high-class rooms which people cannot often entet. For both the competitors and the staff, these are emotionally moving places undoubtedly make memories that last a lifetime, but it seems that behind the scenes it tends to be a very trying experience. Why, you ask? Well first, because they have no accommodations there, they need to go back and forth between the site of the mateh and the hotel. Also, because they are historical buildings, you can't be touching things carelessly, so it's quite a lot of trouble to setup monitors and TV wiring.

A long time ago, in Mount Kouya in winter, there was a match between Ooyama Yasuharu-sensei and Masuda Kouzou-sensei that went down in shogi history. This match to determine who had the right to challenge the then-Meijin, Kimura Yoshio took place on Mount Kouya in the dead of winter with snow falling. In the third and deciding final game, Masuda suffered a devastating loss after missing that he was in check. And so Ooyama-sensei gained the right to challenge, defeated Kimura Meijin, and became Meijin. Masuda's blunder (This was in the 20's of the Showa era) was undoubtedly partially due to fatigue as a result of the cold. In his last years, he is said to have said so himself.

Chapter 73

White Storm

3月のライオン

March comes in like a lion

Chica Umino

U...
UWAaaaaah!
W-WAY BIGGER THAN I EXPECTED
...TH-THE HOTEL IS
HOEEEH
大観
Welcome!!
HELLO! THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR HOSPITALITY!
Souya
Touji
Meijin
Kiriyama Re:
Welcome
Newcomer
mpionship
emorative
itch
SFX ZURAAH
WE'VE BEEN AWAITING YOU! COME RIGHT IN, WE WILL TAKE YOUR BAGS.
THANKS! THIS IS ONE OF OUR STARS, KIRIYAMA 5-DAN.
GLAD TO BE HERE!!
SFX: DONN

GYAAA!
What is that?!
SFX: BIKKUUH (SURPRISE)
HOW ABOUT WE TAKE A LOOK THROUGH THE ROOMS?
SO, FIRST,
ALL RIGHT
GO AHEAD!
SFX: BAAN DONN
YOU'RE FREE UNTIL 7 WHEN THE NIGHT-BEFORE FESTIVAL STARTS
Take a load off!! ☆
PRETTY, AIN'T IT? THAT'S LAKE GOSHO!!
HERE'S YOUR ROOM, KIRIYAMA -KUN
OKAY
SFX: HIROIROOO
HOW 'BOUT IT, KIRIYAMA? WANNA COME WITH?!!
WELL, WE'RE GONNA GO FOR A DIP IN THE SPRINGS FIRST!!
THE BATHS ALL COME DIRECTLY FROM A HOT SPRING SOURCE!!
SFX: BABAAN

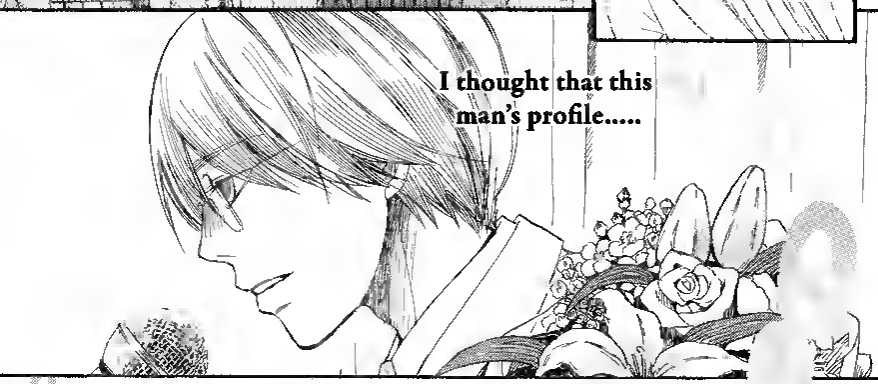
SFX: POHHHHHHNN... KITO KITO
ぽ～ん……
キト…
キト
It looks like his rooms is so grandiose, big, and quiet, he can't calm down……
ALSO, HERE!!
HERE'S THE PROGRAM FOR THE NIGHT-BEFORE CEREMONY!!
JUST TAKE A QUI~CK GLANCE OVER IT.
THAT'S IT BE IN THE LOBBY AT 6, KAY?! ☆
SFX: CHAPOOOOON... SHIIIN... (SILENCE)
ぽ～ん
Present-day Child... (Never entered a bath with strangers)
Seems he didn't have the courage to enter the big bath
ONSEN
ONSEN
ONSEN, HUH…?
Now that I think about it, I've never been in one. I think
うぅ
HEALING BUDDHA WATER
FEEL THE WARMTH IN THIS OPEN-AIR GARDEN…
WATERFALL SHOWER
HEALING

PHOTO OP WITH THE PLAYERS
HUH...?
GREETING THE PLAYERS
A SPEECH FROM THE SPONSORS
A SIGNING* BY BOTH PLAYERS
QUESTION CORNER WITH THE PLAYERS
A TOAST FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE SPONSORING NEWSPAPER
SFX BUKU... BUKU... BUKU—ZAAAH
*WRITING ONE'S SIGNATURE ON THE BACK OF SHOGI BOARDS
GREETING THE GUESTS
THEN THE FLOWER PRESENTATION
FIRST IS THE GREETING FROM THE PRESIDENT
LET'S SEE, THE PROGRAM...
Newcomer Championship Commemorative Match
Reception
That night's night-before party was a big event,
so lots of people flooded the hotel.
Among all the flashbulbs
speeches were made one after another...

Too much bowing and your head starts to spin.
takes a lot of stamina and will-power.
I see now that this
Welcome
Souya Touji Meijin
Kiriyama Rei 5-Dan
—I could barely talk.
Is this an everyday thing for him...?
He's stood alone in this world for allll this time?
and doesn't get exhausted on the night before the match
I want to be by his side so he can brace himself
He'll be surrounded by a crowd of people

keeping such good track of so much...
—Way more than me.
Nikaidou... You're always
Don't try to act cool, Kiriyama.
If you really want to win, then persevere.
—Take better care of your shogi game.

Take better care of yourself.



—when I saw that profile...
—But it really hit me
just how unprepared I was to ask questions about that
—looked like he was searching for something beyond a storm.
And
also how I had not
even entered the storm yet...
THIS IS YOUR FIRST MATCH AGAINST SOYA MEIJIN, ISN'T IT?
WOULD YOU MIND TELLING US...
—JUST WHAT YOUR MIND-SET IS GOING INTO THIS MATCH?

Things like "It's an honor to practice with such a skilled opponent",
and "I'm going to fight back"
came to mind, but—
——I realized something completely different from those things
and I was at a loss for words.
AH...
I'M GOING TO FOCUS SO
IT DOESN'T END IN IN AN INSTANT
I was sure that instead to get a sense of "how far apart we were" it would take several games.
—That's how far apart we were...
AH...
UM...
WHAT SORT OF MATCH DO YOU THINK THIS WILL BE?
WELL, IT'S OUR FIRST GAME
SO I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING HOW THE MATCH FLOWS AS WELL
BUT STILL, I THINK IT'S GOOD THAT HE HAS LESS RIGID ASPECTS TO HIS PLAY
I READ THE NOTATIONS FORM HIS NEWCOMER CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH
AND IT WAS CLEAR TO ME HE IS STUDYING AN AWFUL LOT
AND NOW, SOUYA MEIJIN...
A WORD ABOUT KIRIYAMA 5-DAN?

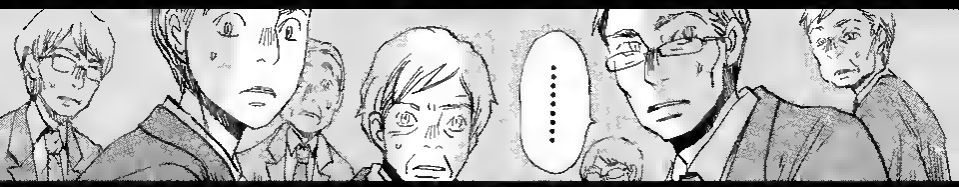
I'LL BE COMING BACK TO IWATE A LOT FOR TITLE MATCHES,
BUT AT SOME POINT I WOULD LIKE TO VISIT WITHOUT HAVING A MATCH TO WORRY ABOUT.
HOW ARE YOU FEELING PHYSICALLY?
SOUYA MEIJIN, YOU'VE BEEN APPEARING IN TITLE MATCHES ALL YEAR ALMOST NON-STOP.
MHM MHM! THAT SOUYA ALWAYS HAS SOME POIGNANT WORDS TO SAY!!
S..
SURE SOUNDS LIKE HIM
SFX PAAA... SHUN
THANK YOU VERY MUCH
YES.
SFX NIKO NIKOH (SMILING)
ANY-HOW, ONE MORE THING...
I don't think your answer quite meshed with the question...?
UM...
U-
...S-Souya Meijin... Is he an airhead?

SFX PEKOH GASHAH DONN KURUHH (TURN)
I-
OH DEAR YOUR CLOTHES!
I'M SO SORRY!!
SOUYA MEIJIN
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
KYAH!
WELL THEN...
ガシャン
ドコ

YES.
UM... SOUYA MEIJIN
YOUR CLOTHES...
SFX ZAWA ZAWA
I KNOW QUITE A LOT OF PEOPLE FROM THE CITY OF MORIOKA WILL BE COMING TOMORROW
SO KIRIYAMA 5-DAN AND I WILL BE DOING OUR BEST
TO HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL MATCH THAT EVERYONE CAN ENJOY.

—Everyone there

held their breath.



No matter how different they might be,

HUUUH?!
YOU ABSENT-MINDED GENERAL!
I take my eyes off you for one second and this happens?!
A red wine stain?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SOUYA?!
AHH!!
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO FOR THE MATCH TOMORROW?!
THAT'S YOUR ONLY SUIT, ISN'T IT?! DID YOU BRING ANYTHING ELSE?!
Geeez!
COME HERE A SECOND!
YOU'VE GOTTA GET THAT OFF RIGHT AWAY!
SFX GLUTH

——After he left
everyone released all the air they were holding in at once.
And
Someone said with a sigh...
RED WINE ?
I'LL HAVE SOMEONE ATTEMPT TO REMOVE THE STAIN RIGHT AWAY BUT—
I'M NOT SURE IF IT WILL COME OUT
HUH? IT EVEN GOT ON YOUR SHIRT AND NECK TIE!
WAAAA
HMMM...

—And so
the day of
the match arrived...
ABLE TO MAIN-TAIN
A HUMAN FORM.
HE'S ONLY JUST BARELY
THAT'S A SHOGI DEMON AT THIS POINT.
!!
SOUYA MEIJIN.
...LOOK!
SFX SUHH

SFX SHUKH

—That morning,

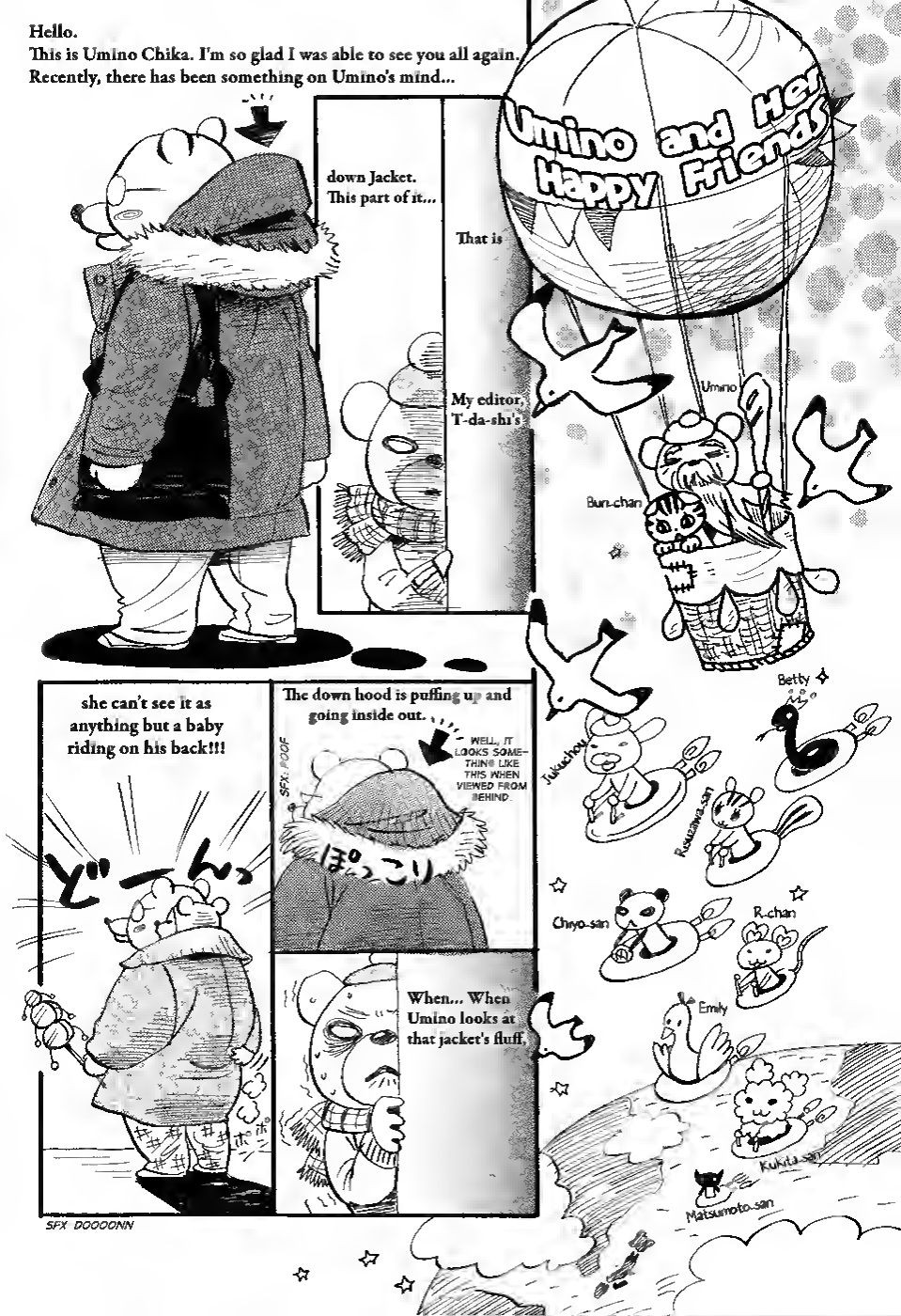
news came in that an out-of-season typhoon had come in from Amami Ooshima sea and made landfall on Kagoshima.

——And,

that typhoon was slowly licking its way northward,

up the Japanese Isles.

Hello.
This is Umino Chika. I'm so glad I was able to see you all again.
Recently, there has been something on Umino's mind...



—And it goes no differently when I have my hair in a hun.....!!!
When I'm wearing a wool hat, he always goes for the pom-pom on top!!
BARRAGE! BARRAGE!!
SFX TOSUTOSUTOSUTOSUTO SUHOWATATATATATATATATA
SFX DODODODO
Also, even when I tell him 'Um, your hood is going iuside ont'. T-da-san just says 'Oh, is it?' and doesn't seem to care at all...
So whenever I see it
I want to fix it.
SFX ZUIOSUH!!! YUHHH
ズボッ!!
せあっ
But then it tends to go in this pattern.
Mammaaa is dinner ready yet? Bun hasn't had her dinner yet todaaay! Could you hurry up?
*Lie
Bun-chan is extremely cute as always and makes me say with fresh surprise "Huh?! Why is there an angel in my house?!" every morning.
—Among those days of war
I am very, very happy I was able to safely deliver this volume 7 to all of you!!!
I hope you continue to support me.
From Umino
Thanks to Nowada-san for the design and Senzaki-san for overseeing!!
I want to give my deepest thanks to everyone who has read this so far. I'll keep moving steadily forward, so if you keep watching over me it will make me very happy.
I know it's a bit sudden to bring it up at a place like this. but T-da-san! I really want to congratulate your eldest son on his birthday!!!
ゴゴゴゴ...
SFX JIRIH JIRIHHHH GOGOGOGO

少女漫画の王道がここにある。

毎月5日・20日発売!!

花とゆめ

充実の連載陣

音久無・草凪みずほ・こうち楓・椎名橙・島田ちえ
鈴木ジュリエッタ・高屋奈月・椿いづみ・トビナトウヤ
仲村佳樹・樋口橘・日高万里・福山リョウコ・松月滉
南マキ・水森暦（五十音順）プラス新人作家陣

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